

Dawn of the Twenty-first Century

2000–2010

Naval aviation entered the third millennium responding to crises around the world while developing the weapons to project American power. Sailors and Marines deployed to challenge dictators who sought weapons of mass destruction, rescued victims of natural disasters, and turned up the heat in the war on drugs. On 11 September 2001, terrorists owing allegiance to al-Qaeda attacked the United States aided and abetted by the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban who ruled most of Afghanistan. The refusal of the Taliban to extradite them left the United States no alternative but to demonstrate globally that harboring terrorists carried a steep price. During the months after the attacks on 9/11, the Americans and their allies overcame fierce opposition and appalling weather and terrain and liberated the country, and then protected the Afghan people during the reconstruction after decades of war.

The coalition also met repeated Iraqi violations of cease-fire accords and presumed attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction with continued vigilance. Years of embargoes and bombardment to deprive Hussein of weapons of mass destruction had disrupted the illicit program, and the transition to a stable government collapsed from an insurgency fueled by internecine religious and tribal strife. Al-Qaeda terrorists and Muslim militants infiltrated the void produced by the ensuing chaos. In 2003, these clashes culminated in the liberation of Iraq from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein and his Ba'ath supporters. Sailors and Marines provided air support and spearheaded ground assaults. Naval aviation carried out missions over dynamic and fluid battlefields in Afghanistan and Iraq. Aircrew supported rapidly developing operations

when the need for time-sensitive strikes led to the reception of target assignments while already airborne.

The fleet tackled global security missions with aerial surveillance and sea control sorties to ensure the uninterrupted flow of oil, provided intelligence and situational awareness to theater commanders, participated in maritime interceptions, evacuated casualties from battlefields and the high seas, and hunted for drug smugglers to reduce the flow of contraband onto America's streets. Space shuttle missions launched with predominately Navy crews, and the Coast Guard celebrated its 217th birthday by announcing its rescue of more than a million lives since its inception.

Naval aviation organizational and operational methods evolved to reflect changing missions. The redesignation and restructuring of carrier battle groups as carrier strike groups occurred, and the groups fell under numbered fleet commanders for operational and administrative control. Under the "six-plus-two" concept of the Fleet Response Plan of the Sea Power 21 strategy, the Navy projected power by deploying six such groups in less than 30 days for contingency operations, with two more groups to follow within three months for rotation or reinforcement. New ships wore the names of pioneers of naval aviation and U.S. history including carriers *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77), and *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78), destroyer *Stockdale* (DDG 106), and auxiliary dry cargo ships *Wally Schirra* (T-AKE 8) and *Washington Chambers* (T-AKE 11).

Additional fighter squadrons became strike-fighter squadrons during the transition from F-14 Tomcats to F/A-18 Hornets and Super Hornets. Sea control squadrons

dropped from the roster as submarine hunting missions shifted to helicopters, and wings and squadrons underwent reorganization to reflect the transition from five helicopter models to two. Aircraft that took flight or hurtled through testing toward introduction included the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, F-35A/B/C Lightning II, EA-18G Growler, E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, P-8A Poseidon, C-40A Clipper, KC-130J Super Hercules, MV-22 Osprey, MH-60R/S Seahawk, AH-1Z Viper, UH-1Y Venom, and VH-71A presidential helicopter.

Naval aviation also integrated unmanned aerial systems such as RQ-4A/B Global Hawks, RQ-8A Fire Scouts, and ScanEagles into operations and added deadly weapons including the AIM-9X Sidewinder short-range air-to-air missile, AGM-84K SLAM-ER (Standoff Land Attack Missile–Expanded Response), JASSM (Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile), JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munition), and Laser-JDAM. The speed and lethality of naval aviation proved crucial to the defense of the free world.

2000

10 JANUARY • Marines from the 2d Reconnaissance Battalion of the II Marine Expeditionary Force became the first to deploy from an MV-22B Osprey in a parachute free fall from 10,000 feet at Fort A. P. Hill, Va.

19 JANUARY • The Navy announced the restoration of ties to the Tailhook Association after a lengthy review that included a visit by a team led by Secretary of the Navy Richard J. Danzig to the organization's August 1999 convention in Reno, Nev. The Navy had suspended the relationship on 29 October 1991.

26 JANUARY • Cruiser *Lake Erie* (CG 70) fired a Standard SM-3 surface-to-air missile that completed an Aegis Light Exo-Atmospheric Projectile intercept at the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Kauai, Hawaii.

27 JANUARY • The first production CH-60S Seahawk made its initial flight at Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. Stratford, Conn. Sikorsky and Lockheed Martin of Owego, N.Y., had signed a \$3 billion contract to provide 237 CH-60Ss through 2007, with ten of the aircraft listed for delivery in 2000. The helicopters were an amalgam of Army Black Hawks and Navy

Seahawks to replace CH-46 Sea Knights in the cargo utility role, MH-53 Sea Dragons in antimine warfare, and HH-60s in combat search and rescue. Navy scheduling directed fleet helicopter readiness squadron HC-3 to introduce the aircraft to the fleet at NAS North Island, Calif.

28 JANUARY • HSL-46 Detachment 10 completed a counternarcotics deployment on board frigate *Robert G. Bradley* (FFG 49) in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific with their return to NS Mayport, Fla. From the beginning of its cruise on 24 August 1999, the detachment proved instrumental in the interdiction and seizure of 204 kilos of cocaine and more than a ton of marijuana, as well as search and rescue and medical evacuation missions.

31 JANUARY • A McDonnell Douglas MD-83 airliner, Alaska Airlines Flight 261, crashed into the Pacific north of Anacapa Island, Calif., killing all 88 people on board. An NP-3D Orion from NAWC Point Mugu, Calif., two HH-60H Seahawks from HCS-5 from NAWC Point Mugu, and Coast Guard helicopters and an HC-130H Hercules responded. *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) supported rescue crews, and Navy mapping with underwater side scanning sonar and video enabled the searchers to recover pieces of wreckage. Reinforcements included amphibious transport dock *Cleveland* (LPD 7), destroyer *Fife* (DD 991), and frigate *Jarrett* (FFG 33), with HH-60 and SH-60 Seahawks embarked, and an S-3B Viking from NAS North Island, Calif.

31 JANUARY • After three years of studies, the Navy announced the revision of carrier homeports on the West Coast. In early 2002, *Nimitz* (CVN 68) was to join *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74)—already stationed there—followed in 2005 by *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) at NAS North Island, Calif. The announcement stipulated that *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) remain at Bremerton, Wash. The need to replace *Constellation* (CV 64) after her retirement in 2003, and forward-deployed *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) in Japanese waters in 2008, prompted the moves.

7 FEBRUARY • The Pentagon released a report that characterized the 78 days of bombing of Operation Allied Force as an effective air campaign that helped end Serbian atrocities in Kosovo.



USN 010912-N-1407C-001

Smoke rises from the stricken remains of the World Trade Center as *George Washington* (CVN 73) arrives to defend New York the day following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

8 FEBRUARY • The Military Sealift Command (MSC) announced a \$31.2 million contract with Geo-Seis Helicopters, Inc. of Fort Collins, Colo., for two SA-330J Pumas to replace Navy helicopters normally assigned to MSC combat store ships for vertical replenishment and ship-to-shore services. Plans called for the rotation of the Pumas among three such ships during deployments to the Mediterranean. On this date, a Puma performed its first replenishment with combat store ship *Sirius* (T-AFS 8) off the Italian coast.

10 FEBRUARY • The Secretary of the Navy approved the merger of the AK (aviation storekeeper) and SK (storekeeper) ratings during ongoing efforts to balance sea-shore rotation, with a completion date of 1 January 2003.

15 FEBRUARY • The operational evaluation of F/A-18E/Fs concluded and the Super Hornet was recommended for introduction into the fleet. During six months of tests, VX-9

completed 1,233 flight hours in more than 850 sorties, and dropped more than 400,000-pounds of ordnance at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

1 MARCH • Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen approved the merger of the AMS (aviation structural mechanic structures) and AMH (aviation structural mechanic hydraulic mechanic) ratings. Conversion to the AM (aviation structural mechanic) rating became automatic and sailors retained the insignia.

13 MARCH • The Navy celebrated the opening of the first permanent hangar designed and built specifically for unmanned aerial vehicles at the Webster Field annex, NAS Patuxent River, Md. The \$2.4 million project proved crucial to VC-6 Detachment A because the sailors had hitherto operated and maintained RQ-2A Pioneers at the mercy of the elements.

16 MARCH • Commander Operational Test and Evaluation Force issued a final report that declared the operational suitability and effectiveness of the AGM-84K SLAM-ER (Standoff Land Attack Missile–Expanded Response).

18 MARCH • Twenty-two F/A-18C Hornets of VFA-82 and -86 were reassigned to MCAS Beaufort, S.C., in preparation for the disestablishment of NAS Cecil Field, Fla.

20 MARCH • “The Spirit of Space” exhibit dedicated to Rear Adm. Alan B. Shepard Jr. was unveiled at the National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, Fla. The centerpiece of the exhibit is a bronze statue of the astronaut sculpted by Capt. Robert Rasmussen.

24 MARCH • The Department of Defense issued the Laser Master Plan, which included a statement concerning the potential of laser technology to undermine U.S. air power by targeting aircrew vision with ground-based lasers.

27 MARCH • Cmdr. Ronald E. Weisbrook and Lt. Cmdr. Daryl J. Martis of the Naval Strike Aircraft Test Squadron made the first release of a GBU-31 (v) 2/B JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munition) from an F-14D Tomcat during testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

28 MARCH • An Omega Air Boeing 707-321B arrived to begin conversion into the first modern commercial aerial refueling tanker for the fleet at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

31 MARCH • Lt. Cmdr. Terry S. Barrett of the Naval Weapons Test Squadron completed the fourth guided launch of an AIM-9X short-range air-to-air missile from an F/A-18C Hornet at NAWC China Lake, Calif. The Sidewinder intercepted a QF-4 Phantom II target during the first evaluation in a dogfight scenario involving defensive infrared countermeasure flares, and the first using the joint helmet-mounted cueing system.

4 APRIL • The Navy approved the name Clipper for C-40A transports converted from Boeing 737-700Cs. The Clipper was intended to replace the C-9 Skytrain, with six of the aircraft earmarked for reservists by 2001—four at Fort Worth, Texas, and two at NAS Jacksonville, Fla. The aircraft carried up to 121 passengers, eight pallets, or a combination thereof. The Navy later added a seventh Clipper.

6 APRIL • F/A-18C Hornets flying from *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) struck Iraqi air defense targets in the southern no-fly zone in response to anti-aircraft fire.

14 APRIL • A C-40A Clipper made its initial flight at Renton Municipal Airport, Wash.

26 APRIL • The Navy announced the development of an advanced neural network technique to increase the detail in satellite images. The technique used the human eye as a model to reveal the composition of information contained in a pixel, and was under consideration for F/A-18 Hornets to assist pilots in passive surveillance.

28 APRIL • The program to upgrade F/A-18A Hornets to F/A-18C capabilities began with the arrival of the first F/A-18A from VFA-203 at Atlanta, Ga., to Naval Weapons Test Squadron, NAWC China Lake, Calif.

11 MAY • The first of two proof-of-concept SH-60Rs—a remanufacture of SH-60B/Fs and HH-60Hs with modified airframes and avionics—arrived for developmental and contractor testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md. Plans called for 243 Seahawk antisubmarine warfare and ship surveillance and targeting conversions from 2000 to 2010.

12 MAY • The Naval Museum of Armament and Technology was established at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

15 MAY • The first production CH-60S arrived to begin developmental testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

17 MAY • Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Mannix of VFA-25 became the first pilot to fly and perform carrier qualifications following corrective laser eye surgery, when he landed an F/A-18C Hornet on board *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72).

25 MAY • Pilot Lt. Cmdr. John M. Hunt, copilot Lt. j.g. Jeremy P. Niles, and aircrewman AW3 Paul Amado of HSL-49 Detachment 2, manned an SH-60 Seahawk embarked on board cruiser *Valley Forge* (CG 50) during a counternarcotics operation in the eastern Pacific and helped to rescue 12 castaways adrift in their vessel.

1 JUNE • The Navy announced the introduction of a six-ounce passive and continuous emergency distress signaling

pocket rescue unit designated SEE/RESCUE that did not require batteries, chemicals, or electronics. During testing, search and rescue teams visually identified the device from an altitude of up to 3,000 feet and more than a mile away.

16 JUNE • Images from an Advanced Tactical Airborne Reconnaissance System (ATARS)–equipped F/A-18D Hornet were data-linked to the Marine Corps Tactical Exploitation Group during evaluations at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

29 JUNE • Naval Force Aircraft Test Squadron began testing an eight-bladed propeller for E-2C Hawkeyes and C-2A Greyhounds at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

29 JUNE • The Navy announced that the AGM-84K SLAM-ER (Standoff Land Attack Missile–Expanded Response) was available for duty with the fleet.

5 JULY • The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) established the office of Assistant CNO for Missile Defense on his immediate staff with the responsibility for theater ballistic and cruise missile defense.

12 JULY • The Navy announced the increase of the 2000 Aviation Career Continuation Pay program to improve retention. This gave naval aviators potential earnings of up to \$245,000 in bonuses through 25 years of aviation service.

16 JULY • F/A-18Fs made their worldwide debut when two of the Super Hornets from VFA-122 flew nonstop from NAS Patuxent River, Md., to the international air show at Farnborough, England.

24 JULY • The P-3C Block Modernization Upgrade Program Development Test Integration Facility opened at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

26 JULY • Amphibious assault ships *Belleau Wood* (LHA 3) and *Essex* (LHD 2) swapped commands in Sasebo, Japan. This enabled crewmembers of forward-deployed ships to switch ships rather than impacting families by moving them to new homeports. The move marked the largest swap to date and required six weeks to complete.

21 AUGUST • NAS Fallon, Nev., commanding officer Capt. David A. Rogers replaced (retired) Capt. Lonny McClung as president of the Tailhook Association. Rogers was the first active duty president of the association since 1991 and initiated the restoration of the association's ties with active duty naval aviators.

23 AUGUST • Two SH-60F Seahawks from HS-15, embarked on board *George Washington* (CVN 73), directed rescuers to the scene of the crash of Gulf Air Flight 072, an Airbus A320, in the Persian Gulf. All 143 passengers and crew died in the crash.

24 AUGUST • The initial test flight of an Improved Tactical Air Launched Decoy took place at NAWC China Lake, Calif. Israeli Military Industries developed the decoy designed to more accurately imitate manned aircraft.

25 AUGUST • The final F/A-18D Hornet rolled off the production line. It was delivered to VMFA(AW)-121 at MCAS Miramar, Calif.

9 SEPTEMBER • The introduction of the C-40A Clipper to Naval Reservists occurred at Boeing Field, Seattle, Wash.

14 SEPTEMBER • Lt. Robert L. Dinunzio of VP-45 piloted a P-3C Orion that directed destroyer *Briscoe* (DD 977) to the rescue of 12 Moroccan castaways adrift in the Mediterranean Sea.

27 SEPTEMBER • The testing of the cooperative engagement capability (CEC) system against drone-simulated threats concluded off Wallops Island, Va. Commands that participated included *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) and amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1). The Navy intended the system, designed to defend the fleet at greater ranges against advanced threats such as cruise missiles, to enable the development of a single integrated air picture. Plans included an initial operational capability for 2004 and the eventual allocation of about 160 systems.

1 OCTOBER • Under a realignment in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Director, Air Warfare Division (N88) was redesignated N78.

12 OCTOBER • Two al-Qaeda terrorists in an inflatable Zodiac-type speedboat detonated a bomb alongside destroyer *Cole* (DDG 67) while the ship refueled in Aden, Yemen, killing 17 sailors and wounding 42 others. Damage control efforts saved *Cole*. Vessels that responded included amphibious assault ship *Tarawa* (LHA 1), dock landing ship *Anchorage* (LSD 36), amphibious transport dock *Duluth* (LPD 6), destroyer *Donald Cook* (DDG 75), frigate *Hawes* (FFG 53), and tug *Catawba* (T-ATF 168), along with British frigates *Cumberland* (F 85) and *Marlborough* (F 233).

13 OCTOBER • The Navy declared the MV-22B operationally effective and fit for land-based operations. Plans included additional testing of the Osprey's blade-fold wing stow system to measure its shipboard suitability.

30 OCTOBER • Harry S. Gann died at the age of 75. Gann joined Douglas Aircraft in 1954 and helped design aircraft control systems for the A-3 Skywarrior, A-4 Skyhawk, and F4D-1 Skyray. A founder of the American Aviation Historical Society, he retired in 1992. His awards include the designation of Honorary Marine Aviator in 1975, Honorary Blue Angel in 1979, and Honorary Naval Aviator No. 24 in 1997.

8 NOVEMBER • Capt. John B. Hollyer and Lt. Kevin M. Quarderer completed the first flight of a T-34C Turbomentor with the addition of wing pylons for external stores at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

8 NOVEMBER • The MV-22B was declared suitable for shipboard operations. The announcement followed a successful demonstration on 31 October of the aircraft's blade-fold wing stow system during sea trials on board amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5).

17 NOVEMBER • A CH-60S Seahawk at Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. Stratford, Conn., received an experimental coat of three-shade matt Haze Gray paint specifically designed to reduce air pollution through the elimination of volatile organic compounds. The project was considered for possible Navy-wide adoption.

7 DECEMBER • An AH-1Z Viper flew for the first time at Bell Helicopter Textron, Arlington, Texas.

7 DECEMBER • Cmdr. Jeffrey R. Penfield piloted the first fleet F/A-18E Super Hornet, BuNo 165781, to VFA-115 at NAS Lemoore, Calif.

20 DECEMBER • Amphibious assault ship *Nassau* (LHA 4) rescued 29 people adrift in a boat in the Mediterranean Sea.

29 DECEMBER • *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) launched the final flights of her deployment supporting Operation Southern Watch over Iraq, and then turned for Australian waters.

30 DECEMBER • An SH-60B Seahawk from HSL-42 Detachment 8, embarked on board cruiser *San Jacinto* (CG 56), participated in the rescue of 11 Yemenis adrift in a boat 60 miles off the coast of Yemen.

2001

1 JANUARY • Aircraft operating from *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) during her maiden deployment struck an Iraqi radar system with precision-guided munitions during Operation Southern Watch.

11 JANUARY • The Navy changed the status of Lt. Cmdr. Michael S. Speicher of VFA-81 from killed in action/body not recovered to missing in action. Speicher had been shot down over Iraq on 17 January 1991.

20 JANUARY • Naval aviator Donald H. Rumsfeld was sworn in as the 21st Secretary of Defense.

25 JANUARY • Flight tests concluded on the AQS-22 dipping sonar for the SH-60R Seahawk.

5 FEBRUARY • During a maritime interception operation surge in the Persian Gulf to enforce Iraqi compliance with UN sanctions, an HS-7 Seahawk operating from *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) proved instrumental in halting the smuggling of 2,300 metric tons of Iraqi oil worth \$460,000 by vessels *Al Salam* and *Mustafa*. The surge concluded on 11 February.

6 FEBRUARY • NAVAIR redesignated the CH-60S Seahawk as MH-60S to reflect the diverse primary missions

of armed helicopter, organic airborne mine countermeasures, and vertical replenishment.

15 FEBRUARY • After an earthquake that devastated Mumbai, India, cruiser *Cowpens* (CG 63), with HSL-51 Detachment 2 embarked, delivered more than \$80,000 worth of disaster relief supplies to victims in the area.

16 FEBRUARY • Since Operation Desert Fox in 1998, the Iraqis had launched more than 60 surface-to-air missiles and fired antiaircraft guns more than 1,000 times at coalition aircraft. Initially, Iraqi gunners learned to briefly radiate their radars, then shut down and run to escape allied AGM-88 HARMs (High-speed Anti-Radiation Missiles). Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein later linked the air defense network with fiber optic cabling so that radars from around Baghdad—outside the no-fly zones—could radiate and send targeting data to remote antiaircraft sites.

The Americans and British, therefore, attacked military targets with the largest strikes since Desert Fox. F/A-18Cs from VFA-37 and -105 and VMFA-312, and EA-6B Prowlers from VAQ-130, embarked on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75), and Air Force F-15E Strike Eagles and British GR.1 Tornados, struck five Iraqi radar, and command, control, and communication nodes outside Baghdad with a variety of ordnance including Hornet-launched AGM-154A JSOW (Joint Standoff Weapons).

7 MARCH • The Navy announced the adaptation of blendable borescope technology—developed by Pratt & Whitney for repairing commercial jet engines—to service AV-8B engines without removing them from the aircraft.

24 MARCH • The Shared Reconnaissance Pod Program began testing on board F/A-18E E2 at NAWC China Lake, Calif. The pod, carried on the jet's centerline, was intended to provide high- and medium-altitude tactical reconnaissance capabilities.

28 MARCH • The Navy agreed to allow sailors in the AD (aviation machinist's mate) and AM (aviation structural mechanic) ratings to apply skills learned in "A" School toward an associate's degree in aviation maintenance technology.

1 APRIL • A Chinese Jianjiji J-8 collided with EP-3E, BuNo 156511, piloted by Lt. Shane J. Osborn of VQ-1, while the Aries II flew a routine surveillance mission in international airspace over the South China Sea. The impact disabled the plane, but Osborn recovered and executed an emergency landing at a Chinese station at Lingshui, Hainan Island. For 15 days the Chinese disregarded U.S. protests and detained the 24 crewmembers before allowing their return to NAS Whidbey Island, Wash. On 5 July, the disassembled pieces of the Aries II arrived on board a Russian Antonov An-124 transport at Dobbins ARB, Marietta, Ga.

1 APRIL • HSL-60 at NS Mayport, Fla., was established as the first Naval Reserve LAMPS Mk III squadron. Its six SH-60B Seahawks were to support Reserve frigates by eliminating the gap between the total of 82 active duty LAMPS detachments and the 88 required. On this date, the deactivation of HSL-94 also occurred.

3 APRIL • The Navy ordered 24 T-6A Texan IIs and technical support from Raytheon Company, Wichita, Kans. The \$148 million order comprised part of the Joint Primary Aircraft Training System with the Air Force.

19 APRIL • An NP2000 E-2C, equipped with digitally controlled all-composite eight-bladed propeller systems, completed its first flight at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

21 APRIL • The initial Naval Reserve C-40A Clipper arrived at NAS JRB Fort Worth, Texas.

23 APRIL • A Naval Strike Aircraft Test Squadron F/A-18A Hornet made the first fully automated landing at sea using the global positioning system on board *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) off Norfolk, Va.

25 MAY • SH-60R Seahawks were redesignated MH-60Rs to reflect their diverse primary missions of undersea warfare, antisurface warfare, and naval surface fire support.

29 MAY • Naval aviation artist Robert G. Smith died at his home in California. In 1936, Smith began his career as an engineer with Northrop Aircraft. In 1994, the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation acknowledged his excellence in naval aviation art by naming him the first recipient of the R. G. Smith Award, which it had named in his honor.

2001 continued

25 JUNE • VFA-115 became the first operational squadron to complete the transition to F/A-18E/F Super Hornets when it received a safe-for-flight certification at NAS Lemoore, Calif.

30 JUNE • The deactivation of HSL-84 at NAS North Island, Calif., marked the passing of the Navy's LAMPS Mk I program.

30 JUNE • Amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) was commissioned.

9 JULY • An E-2C Hawkeye equipped with a Surveillance Infrared Search and Track sensor detected and tracked a theater ballistic missile launched from White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

31 JULY • The Pentagon announced an increase in Iraqi violations after a 19 July surface-to-air missile (SAM) launch against an E-2C Hawkeye flying inside Kuwaiti airspace. During the preceding year, there had been 221 provocations against coalition aircraft in Operation Southern Watch, but in 2001 there were 370 to date. During 2000, some 145 violations occurred in Operation Northern Watch and since January 2001 another 62. To date in 2001, the coalition had struck Iraqi anti-aircraft and SAM batteries 19 times in the south and 7 in the north.

1 AUGUST • VS-24 S-3Bs from *Enterprise* (CVN 65) began to fly missions over Iraq in support of Operation Southern Watch. Equipped with the surveillance system upgrade synthetic aperture radar, Viking crewmembers coupled the system with a tactical common data link that facilitated the tracking and identification of multiple targets, and provided coordinates for RQ-1A Predators from ranges of more than 50 miles.

3 AUGUST • Coast Guard HH-60J Jayhawks and HH-65A Dolphins supported three cutters in the rescue of 22 survivors from a Cuban migrant vessel that on 2 August capsized southeast of NAS Key West, Fla. During the two-day search and rescue mission, the helicopters flew 26 sorties covering more than 1,000 square miles.

5 AUGUST • A team of ten specialists began a 30-day excavation on the slope of Mutnovsky volcano in Kamchatka, Russia. On 11 August 2000, investigators

tentatively identified the area as the crash site of a PV-1 and its crew of seven men. On 25 March 1944, the Ventura had failed to return to Attu in the Aleutians from a five-plane reconnaissance and bombing mission against a Japanese garrison in the Kuriles.

10 AUGUST • About 20 coalition strike aircraft comprising F/A-18C Hornets from VFA-15 and -87 and F-14B Tomcats from VF-14 and -41, embarked on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65), Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons, and British GR.1 Tornados, attacked communication, radar, and missile sites near Baghdad, Iraq.

21 AUGUST • The Pentagon authorized aviation career continuation pay, a sea- and performance-based incentive designed to enhance the retention of experienced naval aviation officers. Eligibility requirements included officers designated as naval aviators or active duty naval flight officers at or below O-6 pay grade, qualified to perform operational flying duty, and having less than 24 years aviation service.

29 AUGUST • The first guided BLU-109 2,000-pound JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munition) launch from an F/A-18E Super Hornet occurred at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

29 AUGUST • The Joint Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) in Time Sensitive Operations project of the Joint Test and Evaluation Program Office was established at NAS Fallon, Nev. A Navy director led the temporary joint Department of Defense organization to address commonality in UAV operations and training.

31 AUGUST • The Marines accepted the delivery of the first three production KC-130Js and a Cessna UC-35D Encore. On 7 September, the first of the Super Hercules arrived at VMGRT-253, MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. The Super Hercules, scheduled to replace all 79 Marine KC-130F/R/Ts, had digitally controlled cockpits and six propellers per engine rather than four. The Marines had requested seven aircraft during 2001 for VMGRT-253 after testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md. The Encore marked the third of seven jets planned to replace CT-39 Sabreliners and was assigned to MCAS Miramar, Calif. Over the next six months, two more followed, one to MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, and one to Marine Reserve NAF Washington, D.C. Two of the initial UC-35C Ultras had been assigned to Marine Reserve NAS New Orleans, La.

10 SEPTEMBER • On the eve of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Navy comprised 375,618 active and 170,168 Reserve sailors, and 4,108 operational aircraft and 317 ships and submarines—44,638 sailors and 91 vessels were deployed. Carriers deployed or underway (all separately) consisted of *Enterprise* (CVN 65) and *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) in the Indian Ocean, *Constellation* (CV 64) and *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) in the Pacific, and *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) forward deployed to Japan. Amphibious ready groups deployed included *Boxer* (LHD 4), with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) embarked, in the Pacific; *Essex* (LHD 2) forward deployed to Japan; *Kearsarge* (LHD 3), 24th MEU, Marmaris, Turkey; and *Peleliu* (LHA 5), 15th MEU, Darwin, Australia.

11 SEPTEMBER • Al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four airliners, crashing two into the twin World Trade Center towers in New York City, one about 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, Pa., and a Boeing 757, American Airlines Flight 77, into the Pentagon. There, the impact thrust the aircraft into the reinforced building and severely damaged the newly opened Navy Command Center. The Pentagon attack killed 189 people, all 64 on board the flight including Naval Reservist and pilot Capt. Charles F. Burlingame III, and injured 125 in the building including 33 sailors and nine Navy civilians. The terrorists killed an estimated 2,977 people in all four 9/11 attacks.

The Department of Defense declared Force Protection Condition Delta—the highest alert. *George Washington* (CVN 73) sailed from Norfolk, Va., to protect New York City. The carrier responded to tasking from NORAD, and supported hospital ship *Comfort* (AH 20) during relief efforts. *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) and *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) positioned themselves to defend the East and West Coasts, respectively, while across the globe many aircraft ashore sortied. Coast Guardsmen began to escort Navy ships during their departures or arrivals at ports. Commander Fifth Fleet Vice Adm. Charles W. Moore Jr. oversaw an emergency meeting at NSA Bahrain, and directed some of the nearby aircraft and vessels toward the north Arabian Sea. *Enterprise* (CVN 65) sailing en route to South African waters turned around and raced northward. *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) rounded India to relieve *Enterprise* but made speed to rendezvous with her and became the first carrier on station in international waters off Pakistan.

14 SEPTEMBER • President George W. Bush declared a national emergency because of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, authorizing the mobilization of up to 50,000 Reservists and National Guardsmen. The initial participation included 13,000 Air Force, 10,000 Army, 7,500 Marine, 3,000 Navy, and 2,000 Coast Guard servicemembers.

19 SEPTEMBER • The induction of the first AH-1W Super Cobra occurred at NADEP Cherry Point, N.C. The move formed a part of the integrated maintenance concept to produce a shorter maintenance turnaround time.

19 SEPTEMBER • *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) deployed from NS Norfolk, Va. HS-11 HH-60H Seahawks escorted the ship to sea.

24 SEPTEMBER • The Navy accepted delivery to VFA-115 of the first full-rate production F/A-18F Super Hornet, BuNo 165875. To date, the delivery of 67 Super Hornets had occurred including 12 to VFA-115 and 34 to VFA-122.

24 SEPTEMBER • Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld delegated his stop-loss authority to the heads of military departments, which allowed the services to retain individuals on active duty beyond their date of separation. In 1990, President George H. W. Bush had originally delegated stop-loss authority to Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney during Operation Desert Shield, although leaders had not implemented it since Operation Allied Force in 1999. The decision affected approximately 10,500 sailors in 11 critical specialties.

25 SEPTEMBER • Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced the designation of America's war on terrorism outside the United States as Operation Enduring Freedom. Activities to sustain homeland defense and civil support received the designation Operation Noble Eagle.

30 SEPTEMBER • While *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) sailed en route to the Arabian Sea she hoisted aloft a national flag that New York City firefighters George Johnson and Dan McWilliams of Ladder 157 and Billy Eisengrein of Rescue 2 had raised over Ground Zero. On 23 September, New York Governor George E. Pataki and the city's Mayor Rudolph W. Guiliani had signed the flag. The flag was flown to *Theodore Roosevelt*, where sailors then transferred the colors to other vessels. On 26 March 2002, the carrier returned the flag to the firefighters.



USN 011005-N-2669G-005

An F-14A Tomcat of VF-41 and two F/A-18C Hornets cruise in formation as another Hornet refuels from an Air Force KC-10A Extender of the 763d Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, 5 October 2001. The Navy aircraft were operating from *Enterprise* (CVN 65).

1 OCTOBER • *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) sailed from Yokosuka, Japan, for the Indian Ocean. “I needed a steel lily pad—a Forward Operating Base—just off the coast of Pakistan, and I needed it soon,” CentCom commander Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, afterward explained. On 27 September, *Kitty Hawk* had received notification of deployment to serve uniquely as an afloat forward staging base for special operators, and in ten days she completed carrier qualifications and sea trials that normally take 2½ weeks. To accommodate and support the special operators, the *Kitty Hawk* Carrier Battle Group reconfigured from an average of 8,000 sailors, ten ships, and 72 aircraft to deploy with 4,000 sailors, three ships, and 15 aircraft—eight F/A-18C Hornets, three S-3B Vikings, two C-2A Greyhounds, and two SH-60B Seahawks.

2 OCTOBER • Commandant of the Coast Guard Adm. James M. Loy, USCG, announced that during 2001 maritime interdictions seized an all-time record amount of cocaine.

2 OCTOBER • NATO Secretary-General Lord George Robertson announced that investigators had provided “clear and compelling” evidence of the guilt of Osama bin Laden behind the terrorist attacks on 9/11. The next day, NATO implemented Article 5 of the charter, under which an attack on a signatory was “an attack on all.”

4 OCTOBER • In preparation for the air campaign against Afghanistan, HS-3 and -6 were designated the Navy’s combat search and rescue alert package for the northern Arabian Sea. The Navy received the initial responsibility for all combat search and rescues in Pakistan south of latitude 28° north, and all overwater search and rescues.

4 OCTOBER • P-3C Orions executed intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance flights over Afghanistan, and F/A-18C Hornets from VFA-15 flew combat air patrols over Pakistan. The enormous distances necessitated the eventual establishment of forward operating bases and forward arming and refueling points ashore in Pakistan including Pasni on the coast, Shamsi about 90 miles inland from Pasni, and Jacobabad and Dalbandin in the interior.

6 OCTOBER • Aircraft and ships of NATO Standing Naval Force, Mediterranean, began patrols in the eastern Mediterranean in support of the war on terrorism.

7 OCTOBER • *Enterprise* (CVN 65) and *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) spearheaded the first coalition strikes against al-Qaeda terrorists and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

7 OCTOBER • While *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), destroyer *Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54), and frigate *Gary* (FFG 51) passed through the Strait of Malacca en route to the Indian Ocean, they rescued five Indonesian fishermen from their sinking 40-foot fishing vessel.

8 OCTOBER • The Office of Homeland Security was established to develop and coordinate a national strategy to protect the United States from terrorists. Naval aviation early warning and intelligence aircraft subsequently received tasking for integration into the plan.

12 OCTOBER • *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), after a ten-day voyage of almost 6,000 miles to the Arabian Sea, embarked Task Force Sword at al Masirah Island off Oman. Sword was a composite Army command of more than 600 soldiers including men of Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta, and the 2nd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. It initially comprised about 20 helicopters including Boeing MH-47D and E Chinooks, Sikorsky MH-60K and L Black Hawks, and Hughes Little



Cruiser *Philippine Sea* (CG 58) launches a BGM-109 Tomahawk Land Attack Missile against al-Qaeda and Taliban extremists in Afghanistan during the opening strikes of Operation Enduring Freedom, 7 October 2001.

Birds—either AH-6Js, MH-6Js, or M500s or a combination thereof. Four days later, *Kitty Hawk* commenced operations in her unique configuration. During the cruise, aircraft from Carrier Air Wing 5 flew more than 600 missions including 100 combat sorties.

14 OCTOBER • As the war in Afghanistan entered its second week, Air Force AC-130U Spooky gunships worked with naval aircraft for the first time in the fighting during



011017-N-61874-006

A pilot and radar intercept officer brief a plane captain on the performance of their F-14A Tomcat after a mission from *Enterprise* (CVN 65) over Afghanistan, 17 October 2001.

attacks against a Taliban stronghold near Kandahar. About 15 naval strike aircraft, eight to ten Air Force bombers, and British and U.S. naval-launched BGM-109 T-LAM (Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles) attacked seven target areas—two near Kandahar, one near the crucial crossroads of Mazār-e-Sharīf, and two around the capital of Kabul that collectively consisted of training facilities, surface-to-air missile storage sites, garrisons, and troop staging areas. The Taliban acknowledged damage at Kabul to the military academy and an artillery garrison. The allies also hit a terrorist training camp near Jalālābād. VF-14 maximized forward air control flexibility by configuring five F-14B Tomcats to carry four GBU-12 laser-guided bombs each, and configured the remainder for two GBU-16s.

16 OCTOBER • Joint Staff Deputy Director of Operations for Current Readiness and Capabilities Adm. John D.

Stufflebeem announced the use of engagement zone doctrine in Afghanistan because of the reduction of enemy air defenses. This concept allowed the adoption of “flex targeting” as aircraft bombed a target, refueled in the air, and then hit another target.

17 OCTOBER • Shortly after midnight, *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) launched her first strikes into Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom. Almost 40,000 allied servicemembers and nearly 50 ships and submarines operated in the northern Arabian Sea. *Theodore Roosevelt* made a concession to *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) and shifted her schedule 12 hours to accommodate night operations, which allowed the carriers to maintain pressure on the enemy around the clock. Reveille changed to 1800 and taps to 1000.



USN 011031-N-3405L-007

Two 500-pound GBU-12 laser-guided bombs (left) and an AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missile are visible on the wing of a VFA-94 F/A-18C Hornet flying from *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) over Afghanistan, 31 October 2001.

18 OCTOBER • F/A-18C Hornets from VMFA-251, embarked on board *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), made the first Marine air strikes in Operation Enduring Freedom against Taliban infrastructure in Afghanistan.

19 OCTOBER • The first American ground offensive of the war on terrorism began near Kandahar, Afghanistan, when helicopters lifted soldiers of the Army's Task Force Sword from *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63). Many of the troops then switched to four Lockheed Martin MC-130E/H Combat Talons and raided the compound of Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad A. Umar. The soldiers also struck an unpaved desert airstrip used by terrorist Osama bin Laden at Dolangi near Bibi Tera, 80 miles southwest of the city. Task Force 57 aircraft that supported the raid included aircraft improvement program-equipped P-3C Orions.

An Army Sikorsky MH-60K crashed during a night approach to an airfield in Pakistan, killing two soldiers and injuring five. Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit launched four CH-53E Super Stallions from amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5) to retrieve the Black Hawk. Supporting aircraft included one P-3C Orion, four VMA-331 AV-8B Harrier IIs, and a KC-130 Hercules. Super Stallion pilot Capt. Jay M. Holtermann, USMC, of HMM-163 led the mission. The force landed at the scene and rigged slings to enable a Super Stallion to retrieve the helicopter, but the weight of the Black Hawk compelled the Super Stallion to jettison fuel and stop at a forward arming and refueling point (FARP). Militants shot at the Marines who returned fire and Holtermann ordered an abort. On 24 October, four AH-1W Super Cobras circled overhead when the Marines returned to the FARP and recovered the Black Hawk.

19 OCTOBER • Developmental testing of Block II AGM-84 Harpoon air-to-ground missiles concluded at NAWC Point Mugu, Calif.

21 OCTOBER • As the war in Afghanistan entered its third week, approximately 80 strike aircraft, including about 60 carrier-based, struck 11 target areas including airfields, radar, tanks, vehicles, and military training facilities.

22 OCTOBER • The Navy, at Northrop Grumman, St. Augustine, Fla., received the first of 21 new production E-2C Hawkeyes featuring the cooperative engagement capability system, advanced control workstations, and an integrated satellite communications system.

25 OCTOBER • The Taliban and al-Qaeda defiantly clung to their positions around the besieged city of Mazār-e-Sharif. A forward air controller passed control of an air strike to Maj. Brantley Bond, USMC, of VMFA-251, who flew an F/A-18C Hornet from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71). Bond knocked out at least four anti-aircraft guns and dropped a 500-pound bomb in front of a Taliban tank. The attack flushed additional enemy troops, tanks, and armored personnel carriers from cover, and Bond repeatedly attacked them. He guided other aircraft using his forward-looking infrared system to target enemy vehicles with laser illumination. The survivors attempted to flee in their vehicles and on foot, but the jets accounted for the destruction of 15 armored vehicles. Bond subsequently received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

1 NOVEMBER • Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced that as of the 25th day of combat operations of Operation Enduring Freedom, coalition aircraft had flown more than 2,000 sorties and delivered more than one million humanitarian rations to Afghan refugees.

1 NOVEMBER • Task Force 58 activated by combining the 15th and 26th Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU). Each MEU included a detachment of six AV-8B Harrier IIs from VMA-331 and -223, respectively. The two KC-130 Hercules normally allotted to each unit proved insufficient and the task force received six of the planes—two from VMGR-252 and four from VMGR-352.

2 NOVEMBER • Two Air Force Sikorsky MH-53J Pave Low IIIs of the 20th Special Operations Squadron

attempted a night medical evacuation of a soldier in northern Afghanistan. One crashed during a whiteout at an altitude of about 10,000 feet in Pakistan, and the other recovered the crew, four of whom had been injured. Amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5) prepared to launch an HMM-163 CH-53E Super Stallion and two AH-1W Super Cobra escorts to retrieve the downed helicopter. Instead of risking the recovery forces, however, two VF-102 F-14B Tomcats, embarked on board *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), destroyed it with two GBU-16 bombs.

2 NOVEMBER • OpNavNote 3111 formally completed the disestablishment of the Navy's last active duty adversary squadron, VFA-127, which had occurred on 31 March 1996 at NAS Fallon, Nev.

3 NOVEMBER • Three AV-8Bs from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, embarked on board amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5), flew the first Harrier II strikes in the war on terrorism against targets in southern Afghanistan with Mk 82 500-pound bombs.

8 NOVEMBER • Almost all of the 78 coalition strike sorties flown into Afghanistan—about 60 naval aircraft, seven to ten bombers, and the remainder land-based tactical jets—attacked targets near Mazār-e-Sharif and north of Kabul. F-14 Tomcats and F/A-18C Hornets dropped precision-guided munitions on enemy positions, which aided Islamic State of Afghanistan (Northern Alliance) troops opposed to the Taliban in their siege of the city. One raid killed a Taliban leader and an estimated 85 Islamic militants.

9 NOVEMBER • Air strikes forced terrorists and the Taliban from their positions around Mazār-e-Sharif and Kabul, Afghanistan, to flee or melt into the civilian population. Some 400 to 500 holdouts barricaded themselves in the three-story Sultan Razia Girls School, Mazār-e-Sharif. They confidently prepared for a siege because of their proximity to the Blue Mosque, a sacred shrine that houses the remains of Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam and a cousin and son-in-law to the prophet Muhammad. Afghan warlord Abdul R. Dostum led the Islamic State of Afghanistan (Northern Alliance) forces opposed to the Taliban and requested a raid. Aircraft dropped four bombs directly into the building that enabled allied warriors to capture the school, and with it, the city.



USAF 011107-F-5795G-014

An F/A-18C Hornet prepares to refuel from an Air Force KC-10A Extender during an Operation Enduring Freedom mission, 7 November 2001.

This unhinged the Taliban front in the north, gave the coalition its first large airfield in the country, and opened an overland supply route through Uzbekistan.

10 NOVEMBER • Aircraft bombed al-Qaeda terrorists and the Taliban as they retreated from the northern battlefields of Afghanistan. An E-2C Hawkeye directed a VF-102 F-14B Tomcat to attack a column moving eastward from the city. The Tomcat blasted the lead truck that blocked the remaining vehicles into a narrow mountain defile. Cmdr. Roy J. Kelley, VF-102 commanding officer, flew another Tomcat and led the destruction of vehicles packed with enemy troops in the ensuing traffic jam that stretched for almost ten miles.

14 NOVEMBER • At 0640 near Ghazni, about 50 miles southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan, naval aircraft helped cover three U.S. special operations helicopters during the rescue of eight Christian relief workers including Americans Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer of Shelter Now held hostage by the Taliban.

15 NOVEMBER • Lt. Andrew P. Hayes, piloting a VF-102 F-14B Tomcat, with his radar intercept officer spotted several bivouacs of Taliban armored vehicles in Afghanistan two miles from Army Special Forces. Despite antiaircraft and small arms fire, the fliers dropped three laser-guided bombs that hit two moving tanks and a revetted armored vehicle, and guided three GBU-12 bombs released by their wingman that destroyed two revetted tanks and a fuel truck. Secondary explosions forced more than 50 Taliban troops to flee their positions. Over the next six hours, Hayes guided 12 coalition aircraft until low fuel forced his disengagement. Aircraft dropped 20 laser-guided and 16 general-purpose bombs that resulted in the destruction of 33 vehicles including 27 armored. Hayes received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

15 NOVEMBER • An EA-18 airborne electronic attack concept aircraft—an F/A-18F Super Hornet carrying three ALQ-99 jamming pods—completed initial demonstration flights at Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo.

16 NOVEMBER • The first of two prototype Improved Capability (ICAP) III EA-6B Prowlers logged its first flight at Northrop Grumman, St. Augustine, Fla.

18 NOVEMBER • Destroyer *Peterson* (DD 969) intercepted and diverted suspected smuggler *Samra* to a holding anchorage during maritime interception operations in the northern Persian Gulf. A boarding party discovered 1,700 metric tons of Iraqi oil, but the weather deteriorated with heavy winds and seas. *Samra* sank and EN1 Vincent Parker, ET3 Benjamin Johnson, and four smugglers died. A LAMPS Mk III helicopter from HSL-44 Detachment 4 embarked on board *Peterson*, an SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-42 Detachment 2 from cruiser *Leyte Gulf* (CG 55), two rigid hull inflatable boats from the cruiser, and frigates *Ingraham* (FFG 61) and Australian *Sydney* (FFG 03) rescued six Americans and ten smugglers.

19 NOVEMBER • An Air Force RQ-4A Global Hawk made the first wartime flight of one of the unmanned aerial vehicles over Afghanistan. The Navy subsequently adopted Global Hawks as part of the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance program.

22 NOVEMBER • Overnight, four VMA-223 AV-8Bs, embarked on board amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5), flew the first sorties of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit into Afghanistan. Just before dawn, the Harrier IIs destroyed an al-Qaeda convoy with laser-guided bombs.

25 NOVEMBER • Operation Swift Freedom began—the liberation of southern Afghanistan in the area of Kandahar. Six HMM-163 CH-53E Super Stallions launched from amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5) carrying Marines of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. AH-1W Super Cobras covered the insertion at lower altitudes, and F-14B Tomcats of VF-102 and F/A-18C Hornets flew top cover from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71). The Marines rendezvoused with KC-130 Hercules tankers to refuel en route. Four hours later they reached a desert airstrip, secured by SEALs, at Dolangi southwest of Kandahar and more than 300 miles from their ships. Within an hour, a Hercules landed with additional equipment and supplies. The Marines designated their position Forward Operating Base (FOB) Rhino, which journalists called Camp Rhino. By the next morning, 519 Marines and sailors had landed and developed a perimeter.

They later established an additional forward arming and refueling point and an unmanned aerial vehicle base nearby.

25 NOVEMBER • More than 300 coalition prisoners rebelled at the fortress of Qala-e-Jhangi, six miles west of Mazār-e-Sharīf, Afghanistan. They killed CIA agent and former Marine Johnny M. Spann, stormed the armory, and seized most of the citadel. F/A-18C Hornets dropped seven Joint Direct Attack Munitions on the fortress and two Air Force AC-130H Spectres raked the compound with 40mm and 105mm rounds that touched off a hidden munitions dump. Three days later the holdouts surrendered.

26 NOVEMBER • A Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System—equipped E-8 detected a column of about 15 Taliban vehicles including several armored personnel carriers probing the northwest perimeter of Forward Operating Base Rhino at Dolangi southwest of Kandahar, Afghanistan. F-14B Tomcats of VF-102 from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) broke up the attack and two Marine AH-1W Super Cobras routed the survivors.

28 NOVEMBER • Concerned about the escape of terrorists from Afghanistan via ships, the coalition developed leadership interception operations to catch suspicious vessels sailing off the Iranian and Pakistani coasts. Beginning on this date through 8 December, cruiser *Princeton* (CG 59) conducted some of the first of these operations near Gwadar off southwestern Pakistan. Aircraft from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) searched for smugglers, and ships from her group participated in patrols and interceptions.

30 NOVEMBER • The Battle of Tora Bora began when naval reconnaissance aircraft spotted Taliban troops fleeing toward Tora Bora, a summit that rises from the Spin Ghar Mountains about 35 miles southwest of Jalālābād, Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda terrorist Osama bin Laden had lavished gifts among the local Suleiman Khel tribesmen who thus sheltered the fugitive and his followers.

1 DECEMBER • Amphibious assault ship *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6), with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, deployed six weeks ahead of schedule for Operation Enduring Freedom.



USN 011206-N-65501-006

An SH-60F Seahawk leaves the deck of motor vessel *Kota Sejarah* after dropping off SEALs and Marines during a search for al-Qaeda terrorists in the Arabian Sea, 6 December 2001.

1 DECEMBER • VF-14 and -41 were redesignated VFA-14 and -41, respectively. Both squadrons began to transition from F-14B Tomcats to F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and to relocate from NAS Oceana, Va., to NAS Lemoore, Calif.

4 DECEMBER • An F/A-18C/D Hornet launched a unitary warhead variant of an AGM-154C during the first free-flight tests of a joint standoff weapon at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

5 DECEMBER • Marine and Navy aircraft flew close cover for lines-of-communication interdiction missions along Route 1 between Lashkar Gah and Kandahar, Afghanistan, to cut off the escape of the Taliban and al-Qaeda terrorists fleeing from the battles in the north of the country.

5 DECEMBER • An SH-60F and two HH-60H Seahawks from HS-11, two of the helicopters detached from *Theodore*

Roosevelt (CVN 71) and one from ashore, and additional sailors from HS-6, carried out a visit, board, search, and seizure of container ship *Kota Sejarah*, suspected of smuggling contraband and terrorists, in the Arabian Sea. The Seahawks intercepted the ship and flew armed cover as they guided SEALs in two boats who boarded and stopped the ship and mustered her 22 crewmembers. HS-11 deployed 71 additional Marines, explosive ordnance disposal sailors, and SEALs via fastrope for security and search, supported by a leadership interception operation detachment from amphibious transport dock *Shreveport* (LPD 12). Through 7 December, inspectors detained *Kota Sejarah*, but later released the ship. This marked the first noncompliant boarding in leadership interception operations. Into the New Year, HS-11 joined Task Force Cutlass for additional similar and maritime interception operations.



USN 011225-N-6119T-001

An S-3B Viking of VS-32 returns to *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) after a mission over Afghanistan, 25 December 2001.

6 DECEMBER • A P-3C Orion orbiting overhead confirmed a Taliban and al-Qaeda probe against Forward Operating Base Rhino at Dolangi southwest of Kandahar, Afghanistan. The Marines fired 81mm mortars and the Taliban disengaged. Later that evening, a convoy of seven vehicles attempted to slip past the Marines but an Orion spotted the infiltrators as they dismounted to advance. F/A-18C Hornets and F-14 Tomcats disrupted the attack by dropping six 500-pound and two 1,000-pound laser-guided bombs. A UH-1N Iroquois, BuNo 160440, crashed while taking off and all on board escaped, but a fire destroyed the helicopter.

7 DECEMBER • The Marine Corps accepted the first AN/AAQ-28 Litening II targeting pod, which was designed to enable AV-8B Harrier IIs to autonomously deliver precision-guided munitions.

7 DECEMBER • Aircraft and ships of NATO's Task Force Endeavour began their first deployment in the eastern Mediterranean to track shipping capable of smuggling to terrorists.

11 DECEMBER • The induction of the last of 74 Marine day-attack AV-8Bs for modification into night-attack Harrier II Plus configurations occurred at NADEP Cherry Point, N.C. The aircraft were expected to return to fleet service in September 2003.

12 DECEMBER • An Air Force B-1B Lancer of the 20th Bomb Wing lost power to an engine while outbound from a night strike over Afghanistan, crashing about 30 miles north of Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory. Lt. William Pennington of VP-4 piloted a P-3C Orion that supported SAR mission commander Maj. Brandon Nugent, USAF, in an Air Force KC-10A Extender. The aircraft located the Lancer and alerted destroyer *Russell* (DDG 59). Despite shallow shoal

water that prevented the vessel from closing the wreck, she lowered two rigid hull inflatable boats that recovered all four survivors. Ships subsequently retrieved the bomber.

13 DECEMBER • A combined antiarmor team from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, designated Task Force Sledgehammer, advanced to the Kandahar airport in Afghanistan, linking up en route with Army special operators. AV-8B Harrier IIs and AH-1W Cobras supported by additional coalition aircraft provided close air support. CH-53E Super Stallions flew in reinforcements that enabled the Marines to establish a forward operating base.

16 DECEMBER • *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) relieved *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) in the Arabian Sea and launched her first strikes in Operation Enduring Freedom.

17 DECEMBER • The coalition claimed victory at Tora Bora, Afghanistan. F/A-18C Hornets bombarded escape routes as Taliban and their al-Qaeda allies straggled across the Pakistani border. From 25 November, allied aircraft had dropped more than 1,600 bombs including precision Joint Direct Attack Munitions on the enemy around the cave complex. Terrorist leader Osama bin Laden was not found.

18 DECEMBER • French Task Force 473 rendezvoused with U.S. Task Force 50 about 50 miles off the Pakistani coast. The combined group comprised four carriers—*Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74), French *Charles de Gaulle* (R 91), and Italian *Guiseppe Garibaldi* (C 551). On this date, almost 100 coalition vessels operated across the Indian Ocean.

24 DECEMBER • The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit began to withdraw from Forward Operating Base Rhino, Afghanistan.

2002

3 JANUARY • Coalition aircraft including four F/A-18C Hornets, four Air Force B-1B Lancers, and an AC-130 Spectre gunship struck the terrorist training and support complex at Zhawar Kili al-Badr, 30 miles southwest of Khowst, Afghanistan. The United States had attacked the facility on 20



An AH-1W Super Cobra covers Marines on a LAV-25 light armored vehicle as they begin a patrol at Kandahar, Afghanistan, 28 December 2001.

August 1998 in retaliation for the terrorist attacks against U.S. Embassies in East Africa. During this battle, coalition aircraft leveled the facility's buildings, sealed all known caves, and knocked out anti-aircraft artillery and tracked military vehicles. The battle concluded on 14 January.

8 JANUARY • HSL-46 Detachment 3, embarked on board destroyer *Hayler* (DD 997), conducted the year's first maritime interception operation in the Mediterranean Sea when an SH-60B Seahawk intercepted merchant vessel *Rasha J*. During 2002, five detachments from HSL-46 deployed to the Fifth and Sixth Fleets collectively conducted more than 500 interceptions and queried over 700 merchant vessels.

USN 080424-N-4656L-139



An MH-60R Seahawk of HSM-71 fires an AGM-114 Hellfire air-to-ground missile during testing off San Diego, 24 April 2008.

13 JANUARY • Two HH-60H Seahawks of HS-11 and one from HS-8, operating from amphibious transport dock *Shreveport* (LPD 12), and reinforced by additional sailors from destroyer *Elliot* (DD 967), provided sniper and AGM-114B Hellfire air-to-ground missile coverage for SEALs during a night boarding of suspected smuggling vessel *al Obeid* in the north Arabian Sea.

28 JANUARY • Soldiers of the Army's 101st Air Assault Division began to relieve the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit in Afghanistan.

3 FEBRUARY • Naval Forces Central Command established Combined Task Force 150 to deny terrorists unimpeded use of the seas by countering illicit movements of them, weapons, and drugs. The multinational command's theater of operations included an area that stretched from

the Red Sea across the Gulf of Aden, Horn of Africa, Somalia Basin, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Strait of Hormuz.

5 FEBRUARY • Task Force 58 redeployed to Bahrain followed three weeks later by its disestablishment, as the amphibious command structure in Southwest Asia began to return to the pre-9/11 organization.

8 FEBRUARY • The Navy unveiled an MH-60S Seahawk during a ceremony with fleet readiness squadron HC-3 at NAS North Island, Calif.

10 FEBRUARY • Naval aircraft supported a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment in the seizure of 12.65 tons of cocaine from smugglers on board Colombian-flagged fishing vessel *Paulo*, 300 miles south of the Galapagos Islands.

14 FEBRUARY • Reserve CH-53E Super Stallion squadron HMH-772 was activated for one year at NAS JRB Willow Grove, Pa. The squadron provided heavy lift capability for the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit via HMM-263 at MCAS New River, N.C.

4 MARCH • Pilot Cmdr. Don Burns, copilot Lt. Cmdr. Eric Humphreys, and aircrewmembers AW1 Jim Peters and AD1 Shawn Robertson flew the maiden flight of HSL-60 at NS Mayport, Fla.

4 MARCH • Operation Anaconda began—a coalition thrust to trap al-Qaeda terrorists and Taliban in the Shah-e-Kot valley of southeastern Afghanistan. At times during the first several days, *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) and *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) supported allied troops with Joint Direct Attack Munitions and BLU-118 thermobaric bombs. This was the first combat deployment of the class of fuel-rich compositions that generated high sustained blast pressures for use against tunnels and underground facilities. Within the first 24 hours, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force aircraft dropped 177 GBU-31 JDAMs and GBU-12 laser-guided 500-pound bombs. P-3C Orions flew intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions. Five AH-1Ws and three CH-53E Super Stallions of HMM-165 from the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit flew from amphibious assault ship *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6) to operate out of Bagram Air Base. The Marines later established a forward arming and refueling point that enabled the Super Cobras to fight at extended ranges. The fighting raged through 18 March.

6 MARCH • *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) relieved *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) in the northern Arabian Sea.

11 MARCH • From 9/11 to this date, the Navy deployed six carrier battle groups, four amphibious ready groups, and about 60,000 active and 13,000 Reserve sailors and Marines to the Indian Ocean area.

12 MARCH • Commanding officer Cmdr. John C. Aquilino and Lt. Cmdr. Kevin J. Protzman of VF-11 made the first combat strike with a Mk 84 2,000-pound JDAM (GBU-31) from an F-14B Tomcat during Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan.

27 MARCH • *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) returned from deployment. Aircraft embarked from Carrier Air Wing 1 had flown more than 10,000 sorties and dropped over 1.7 million pounds of ordnance.

31 MARCH • In Guam, HC-5 received the first three MH-60S Seahawks to be delivered to an operational squadron.

4 APRIL • The first fully remanufactured SH-60B to MH-60R standards completed its first flight at Owego, N.Y. During 2001, the Navy had decided to shift the program from remanufacturing existing H-60 airframes to producing new aircraft and planned a total of 243 MH-60Rs.

15 APRIL • Six F/A-18D Hornets from VMFA(AW)-121 arrived in Kyrgyzstan to initiate the first naval aviation fighter operations from that country. The Marines integrated into the Air Force's 376th Air Expeditionary Wing during strikes over Afghanistan.

15 APRIL • NATO's Standing Naval Forces Atlantic returned to the eastern Mediterranean Sea for a second deployment as Task Force Endeavour to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

1 MAY • Test squadrons without alphanumeric designations were redesignated air test and evaluation squadrons in keeping with fleet standards—HX-21, and VX-20, -23, -30, and -31.

3 MAY • The Department of Defense announced the certification of six acquisition projects including a program to remanufacture 280 H-1 replacements for AH-1 Cobras and UH-1 Hueys.

3 MAY • HX-21 received the second test AH-1Z Viper to arrive at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

10 MAY • Two Coast Guard HH-60J Jayhawks and an HU-25 Guardian supported cutter *Harriet Lane* (WMEC 903) in the rescue of 71 Haitian migrants from an overloaded 35-foot vessel that capsized six miles west of Great Inagua, Bahamas. The Coast Guard also recovered the bodies of 14 migrants who perished. An HC-130H Hercules and patrol boat *Nantucket* (WPB 1316) carried additional medical personnel and supplies to the area.

13 MAY • Through 16 May, testing of the integration of the Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC) system with E-2C Hawkeye 2000 weapon systems occurred at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

19 MAY • An RQ-8A Fire Scout Vertical Takeoff and Landing Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (VTUAV) began its flight test program at NAWS China Lake, Calif. The Navy intended Fire Scouts to provide situational awareness and precision targeting, and to be fully autonomous with little required operator intervention. The design of littoral combat ships included the provision to operate Fire Scouts.

31 MAY • Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. selected the Thales TopOwl Avionics helmet-mounted display for Marine H-1s, with 180 AH-1Z Vipers and 100 UH-1Y Venoms receiving the system.

31 MAY • Central Command activated Combined Joint Task Force 180 to assume control of allied operations in Afghanistan.

17 JUNE • An S-3B Viking from VS-31, embarked on board *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67), and an SH-60B from HSL-42 Detachment 7, embarked on board cruiser *Vicksburg* (CG 69), encountered 20-foot seas during the rescue of all 16 crewmembers from merchant vessel *al Murtada*, adrift off Oman.

18 JUNE • The Americans and British exchanged diplomatic notes terminating their World War II agreement on leased bases in Bermuda. The United States had sought additional Atlantic bases to protect shipping from German submarines and famously traded 50 obsolete destroyers for the rights. After the war, NAF Bermuda continued to support naval aviation operations against Soviet submarines until its disestablishment on 1 September 1995.

24 JUNE • The Navy accepted the first engineering and development version of the Shared Reconnaissance Pod.

23 JULY • Two SH-60B Seahawks of HSL-48 Detachment 7 began a six-month deployment to the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf on board frigate *Kauffman* (FFG 59), which sailed with *George Washington* (CVN 73). The detachment conducted multiple maritime interception

operations during the cruise including one that involved 60 flight hours tracking a merchant vessel, leading to the capture of 15 suspected al-Qaeda terrorists by Italian authorities.

24 JULY • *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) deployed to the western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Persian Gulf. Twelve F/A-18E Super Hornets of VFA-115 and two MH-60S Seahawks of HC-5 embarked during the first operational deployment of these two aircraft types. The ship also put to sea with 1,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions for use with F/A-18Es. During the first few days of the cruise, pilot Lt. Corey L. Pritchard of VFA-115 accomplished the initial deployed Super Hornet landing on board the carrier.

30 JULY • The Navy released a draft environmental impact statement for public comment on the introduction of F/A-18E/Fs to the East Coast. The statement affected ten fleet squadrons (130 Super Hornets) and one fleet readiness squadron (32 aircraft). The preferred alternatives comprised either the fleet readiness and six fleet squadrons at NAS Oceana, Va., and four squadrons at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.; or the fleet readiness and eight squadrons at Oceana, and two squadrons at Cherry Point. In addition, planners proposed an outlying landing field in either Craven or Washington counties, N.C.

6 AUGUST • The first rescue using a TRI-SAR harness occurred when a UH-3H Sea King from NAS Patuxent River, Md., rescued a man stranded on a mud flat.

16 AUGUST • An RQ-8A Fire Scout Vertical Takeoff and Landing Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle completed its first in-flight sensor payload demonstration at NAWS China Lake, Calif.

26 AUGUST • Maj. Pat Mohr, USMC, of HX-21, and Bell Helicopter test pilot Herb Moran, flew the first AH-1Z Viper with an integrated all-digital cockpit on its maiden flight at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

6 SEPTEMBER • The Center for Aviation Technical Training was activated at NATTC Pensacola, Fla. The center defined all curriculum and educational tools, and developed technical training solutions and professional development programs for all aviation sailors and Marines and for nondesignated airmen.

11 OCTOBER • Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England issued a memorandum concerning the first American casualty of the Persian Gulf War, Capt. Michael S. Speicher, that changed his status to missing/captured. Under international law, the action entitled Speicher to treatment as a prisoner of war.

29 OCTOBER • Commander Central Command Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, announced the impending deployment of 700 to 800 Marines to Djibouti as part of Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa.

5 NOVEMBER • The Navy announced the relocation of the Aviation Maintenance Officer School the next month from NAS Pensacola, Fla., to operate as part of Naval Air Maintenance Training Group Detachment Milton at NAS Whiting Field, Fla.

6 NOVEMBER • Lts. John E. Turner and Eric C. Doyle of VFA-115 flew the first F/A-18E Super Hornet combat live-fire action. During a mission from *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72), they dropped four GBU-31 Mk 84 2,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions against an Iraqi command and control facility near Tallil and against two surface-to-air missile systems near Al-Kut, both sites located southeast of Baghdad.

13 NOVEMBER • Two CH-46D Sea Knights from HC-6 Detachment 6 augmented about 400 Marines of Headquarters Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa during a deployment on board command ship *Mount Whitney* (LCC 20) from Morehead City, N.C., to a former French Foreign Legion base at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti. On 10 December, *Mount Whitney* arrived off the Horn of Africa, and two days later Central Command transferred authority for that region to the task force. On 27 December, an Air Force Sikorsky MH-53 Pave Low performed landing qualification trials on board the command ship, which on 13 June 2003, returned to Norfolk, Va.

23 NOVEMBER • Space shuttle *Endeavour*, on mission STS-113, launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla. During this mission to the International Space Station, naval aviator crewmembers included Capts. James D. Wetherbee and Michael E. Lopez-Alegria, and Cmdr. John B. Herrington—the first Native American in space. *Endeavour* returned to the center on 7 December.

4 DECEMBER • *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) launched her last Operation Southern Watch mission of the deployment. VFA-115 had flown a total of 214 F/A-18E Super Hornet combat sorties.

8 DECEMBER • Super Typhoon Pongsana devastated Guam. Naval aircraft spearheaded relief efforts that included the airlift of more than \$4 million worth of supplies.

31 DECEMBER • During 2002, the Iraqis fired at coalition aircraft about 500 times.

2003

1 JANUARY • The merger of the AK (aviation storekeeper) and SK (storekeeper) ratings into SK became effective for enlisted pay grades E1 to E6, with E7 and above eligible for the exams over succeeding months.

16 JANUARY • HC-5 Detachment 6, forward deployed to Japan on board *Essex* (LHD 2), made the first deployment of MH-60S Seahawks with an amphibious assault ship. The detachment returned to the United States on 30 January.

16 JANUARY • Space shuttle *Columbia*, on mission STS-107, launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla. At about 0900 on 1 February, the shuttle broke apart during reentry over Texas killing all seven crewmembers including naval aviation veterans Capts. David M. Brown and Laurel B. S. Clark and Cmdr. William C. McCool. Investigators concluded that a thermal protection system breach on the left wing leading edge allowed superheated air to penetrate during reentry and progressively melt the wing's aluminum structure, which weakened it until aerodynamic forces caused its failure and loss of control.

26 JANUARY • HSL-45 Detachment 6 relieved HSL-37 Detachment 2 on board destroyer *Fletcher* (DD 992) during the first Sea Swap experiment at Perth, Australia. An Air Force Lockheed C-5 Galaxy returned part of the original detachment and its helicopters to Hawaii. The Navy intended the program to maintain the deployment of ships in forward areas by swapping crews and air detachments.



USN 030320-N-9593M-039

An F/A-18C Hornet of VFA-113 launches from *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in the Arabian Gulf during Operation Iraqi Freedom, 20 March 2003.

28 JANUARY • An SH-60 Seahawk from HSL-48 Detachment 2, embarked on board frigate *John L. Hall* (FFG 32), coordinated with maritime patrol aircraft and Coast Guard cutter *Diligence* (WMEC 616) to intercept a 40-foot go-fast vessel in the Caribbean Sea. The four smugglers scuttled their boat when captured, but the combined Navy–Coast Guard team recovered 4,265 pounds of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$130 million.

4 FEBRUARY • The last E-6A Mercury, BuNo 164409, departed Tinker AFB, Okla., to undergo E-6B modifications to enable it to communicate with strategic defense forces.

12 FEBRUARY • The Marines began their first operational assessment through 27 March of AH-1Z Viper and UH-1Y Venom upgrades.

1 MARCH • The first F-14D equipped with a Joint Direct Attack Munition deployed. In February, a NAVAIR team had modified all forward-deployed Tomcats.

13 MARCH • The crew of an SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-51, deployed with frigate *Gary* (FFG 51), assisted in the rescue of all eight Iraqi fishermen from dhow *Kaptain Muhamadat* when she lost steerage and propulsion in heavy seas and capsized 20 miles south of the Iranian coast.

19 MARCH • The coalition launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. From June 2002 to this date, allied aircraft had struck nearly 400 Iraqi military targets. During the first 19 days of March, the pace of operations increased and aircraft flew 4,000 strike and support sorties against Iraqi radar, antiaircraft guns, and fiber-optic links to suppress enemy air defenses in preparation for the invasion of Iraq.



An F/A-18C Hornet of VFA-105 launches from *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) in the Mediterranean, 20 March 2003.

22 MARCH • Despite intense fire from numerous Iraqi guns and surface-to-air missiles, VFA-113 led a strike that used Joint Direct Attack Munitions to destroy the Iraqi Ba'ath Party headquarters comprising 12 targets in four cities.

22 MARCH • *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) launched her first strikes of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The raid struck Iraqi command and control and infrastructure targets including a palace complex used by Saddam Hussein as military facilities, and one of the primary Iraqi AM broadcasting stations used to direct troops. During the first several days of the fighting, aircraft suppressed Iraqi air defenses and destroyed an *Ansar al-Islam*—Supporters of Islam, a radical Kurdish Islamic group—terrorist camp near the Iranian border. E-2C Hawkeyes proved especially useful in enabling pilots to link-up with special operators on the

ground despite harsh weather that interfered with radio and satellite communications.

23 MARCH • A *turab*—dust storm—blew fine ochre dust and sand that coated exposed skin and gear across the southern half of Iraq and most of Kuwait. Four VMFA-323 F/A-18C Hornets launched a strike from *Constellation* (CV 64) against Special Republican Guard barracks and presidential security buildings near Saddam International Airport and each hit their targets with three 2,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions. The raid directly contributed to the subsequent capture of the airport and the advance on Baghdad.

23 MARCH • The Iraqis ambushed 33 soldiers of the Army's 507th Maintenance Company in An Nasiriyah, killing 11 Americans and capturing seven more including



USN 030323-N-5319A-005

A British Royal Navy Westland Lynx HMA.8 flies plane guard for an MH-53E of HM-14, embarked on board amphibious transport dock *Ponce* (LPD 15), while the *Sea Dragon* pulls a Mk 105 mine countermeasures magnetic sled near the mouth of the Khawar Abd Allah (river) in Iraq, 23 March 2003.

Pfc. Jessica D. Lynch, USA. On 1 April, Marines from Task Force Charlie staged a diversionary attack while CH-46E Sea Knights from HMM-165, embarked on board amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4), CH-53E Super Stallions, SEALs, and soldiers of Task Force 20 rescued Lynch from Saddam Hospital in the town.

24 MARCH • Commander Task Force 50 Rear Adm. John M. Kelly announced that aircraft had flown about 550 sorties against the Iraqis from *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), *Constellation* (CV 64), and *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). The long ranges required the configuration of four VFA-115 F/A-18E Super Hornets as tankers.

24 MARCH • Aircraft of Carrier Air Wing 3 struck Iraqi SA-2 and Roland surface-to-air missile sites in the Kirkuk area with AGM-88 High speed Anti-Radiation Missiles.

25 MARCH • Two VFA-151 F/A-18C Hornets and a VS-38 S-3B Viking destroyed Saddam Hussein's presidential yacht *Al Mansur*, Osa I-class missile boat *P-205*, and training ship *Ibn Khaldoun* (A 507) on the Tigris River near Basra. This was done after receiving a short order tasking for the time-sensitive strike. A Hornet laser-designated one of the targets, while the Viking struck it with an AGM-65E Maverick air-to-ground missile during the first instance of a Viking combat overland strike.

26 MARCH • A *turab*—dust storm—blanketed *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) during flight operations. The carrier shifted almost 30 miles in a vain attempt to outrun the storm but the tempest wreaked havoc with operations. Commander Central Command Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, learned that the storm had immobilized Iraqi troops preparing to counterattack U.S. forces, and thus directed repeated strikes into 27 March by naval aircraft and Air Force bombers that



USN 030324-N-15125-024

CH-53E Super Stallion pilot Maj. Richard Focht, USMC, prepares his flight gear on board amphibious assault ship *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) before flying a combat resupply mission into Iraq, 24 March 2003.

decisively broke up enemy troop concentrations. During one battle, the Iraqi *Medina* Republican Guard Tank Division took advantage of inclement weather to attack the Army's V Corps. F/A-18C Hornets of VFA-113 persevered through heavy overcast and, at one point with no visibility, bombed the Iraqis to a standstill.

26 MARCH • Coalition aircraft struck nine Iraqi surface-to-surface missiles and their launchers in Baghdad with precision guided munitions. The Iraqis had hidden the weapons within a residential area barely 300 feet from civilian homes.

26 MARCH • Some 954 paratroopers of the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade seized an airfield near Bashur in northern Iraq. During the following days, aircraft from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) supported the soldiers against Iraqi counterattacks.

27 MARCH • While flying a jamming mission, a VAQ-131 EA-6B Prowler received a request to assist three aircraft strikes against Iraqi surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites. Despite antiaircraft fire, the Prowler coordinated with the strike aircraft and knocked out the SAMs with AGM-88 High-speed Anti-Radiation Missiles.

27 MARCH • The Navy ordered a seventh C-40A Clipper to improve transportation capabilities.

28 MARCH • Naval and other coalition aircraft attacked nine enemy meeting places northeast of Basra, Iraq, killing an estimated 200 Ba'ath party officials and paramilitary chiefs.

28 MARCH • Naval aircraft helped Marines defeat a ferocious attack by Iraqi irregulars supported by armored personnel carriers, rockets, and antiaircraft artillery at An



USN 030415-N-4142G-106

An F-14D Tomcat of VF-2 makes a hard landing while returning to *Constellation* (CV 64) from a mission into Iraq, 15 April 2003.

Nasiriyah. Additional strikes supported allied troops locked in firefights with Iraqi troops and *Fedayeen Saddam* (Saddam's Martyrs) in the Rutbah and Samawah areas. Other air assaults used 1,000-pound bombs to destroy Republican Guard missile sites and fuel depots around Baghdad.

28 MARCH • Two F/A-18 Hornets knocked out three Iraqi Al Samoud surface-to-surface missile launchers approximately 25 miles northwest of Basra.

30 MARCH • Lt. Cmdrs. Hal Schmitt and Jason H. Norris of VFA-14 piloted two F/A-18Es, and Lt. Cmdrs. Brian M. Garrison and Mark W. Weisgerber and Lts. Thomas R. Poulter and Tom Brodine of VFA-41 manned two F/A-18Fs during a temporary 1,700 mile shift from *Nimitz* (CVN 68) to *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). The transfer was to provide *Abraham Lincoln* with an improved mix of fighter-tanker capabilities, and raised the number of Super Hornets embarked on board that ship to 16. On 6 April, the four Super Hornets returned to *Nimitz* after her arrival in the Persian Gulf.

31 MARCH • Iraqi troops advanced upon paratroopers of the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade in northern Iraq. Aircraft from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) flew nearly 50 sorties that stopped the attack by bombing artillery installations, a barracks, and a surface-to-air missile site.

2 APRIL • Allied aircraft used 40 Joint Direct Attack Munitions to destroy a heavily secured Iraqi storage facility used by the regime's Special Security Organization in Baghdad's Al Karkh district.

2 APRIL • The Navy took delivery of the first low-rate initial production Shared Reconnaissance Pod system at Raytheon Technical Services Co., Indianapolis, Ind.

3 APRIL • F/A-18Fs embarked on board *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) made the first operational flight of the Super Hornet Fast Tactical Imagery photoreconnaissance module during a strike over Iraq.



USN 030420-N-2515C-091

Amphibious assault ship *Tarawa* (LHA 1) leads an impressive display of naval power in the northern Persian Gulf—(from left) *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6), *Kearsarge* (LHD 3), *Bataan* (LHD 5), *Saipan* (LHA 2), and *Boxer* (LHD 4)—on 20 April 2003.

5 APRIL • The allies won the Battle of Debecka Pass, Iraq. Army Special Forces and Kurdish *Peshmerga* militiamen aided by Navy bombing guided by Air Force combat controllers captured and held the gap, but Iraqi troops and armored vehicles contained their advance. An F/A-18 Hornet from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) knocked out a Ba'ath command group with a 750-pound bomb and the Iraqis subsequently fled, leaving eight tanks and 16 armored personnel carriers burning. Two VF-213 F-14Ds flying from *Theodore Roosevelt* attacked a group of Iraqi tanks firing from the south. One of the Tomcats accidentally bombed a group of *Peshmerga* gathered around a disabled T-55 Iraqi main battle tank, killing 17 Kurds and injuring another 45 including its commander, Wajih Barzani.

11 APRIL • The Navy designated the Mediterranean east of 30°E longitude as a zone for eligibility for Imminent Danger Pay or Combat Zone Tax Relief benefits. This move fell short of reaching all veterans who had served in the conflict because it failed to identify those who had participated

from 19 March. On 18 February 2004, Navy officials thus announced the retroactive eligibility of veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom for the benefits during that initial 24-day period. The decision principally impacted Task Force 61, Carrier Air Wings 3 and 8, *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75), and *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71).

20 APRIL • Twenty-six ships of Task Force 51, including amphibious assault ships *Tarawa* (LHA 1), *Saipan* (LHA 2), *Kearsarge* (LHD 3), *Boxer* (LHD 4), *Bataan* (LHD 5), and *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6), sailed in the northern Persian Gulf.

30 APRIL • VC-8's last TA-4J Skyhawk departed NS Roosevelt Roads, P.R., for display at the Glenn Martin Museum, Baltimore, Md.

1 MAY • President George W. Bush arrived on board *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in a VS-35 S-3B Viking, BuNo 159387, crewed by squadron executive officer Cmdr. John



USN 030529-N-0295M-006

This F-14D Tomcat of VF-2 on board *Constellation* (CV 64) displays its record of 60 bomb drops during Operation Iraqi Freedom, 29 May 2003.

P. Lussier and Lt. Ryan M. Phillips, and accompanied by a Secret Service agent. At one point during the 30-mile flight from NAS North Island, Calif., Lussier turned control of the aircraft, called Navy 1, over to the president. The Viking later was sent for display at the National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, Fla.

12 JUNE • Amphibious assault ship *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) diverted to Liberian waters for Operation Shining Express—

the potential evacuation of Americans stranded by fighting in that country. On 19 June, the ship left the region.

22 JUNE • During a training exercise at Godoria Range near Djibouti, one of two Boeing B-52H Stratofortresses accidentally dropped nine M-117 bombs on Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa troops, killing Capt. Seth R. Michaud, USMC, of HMH-461, wounding nine other Americans, and destroying two squadron CH-53E Super Stallions.

24 JUNE • A P-3C Orion, an MH-60 from *Concord* (T-AFS 5), and British landing ship *Sir Tristram* (L 3505) rescued all 27 crew members of Egyptian-flagged cargo vessel *Green Glory* in the Arabian Sea, about 350 miles off the coast of Oman. Sailors hoisted the last survivor aloft just as the ship sank amid heavy seas after it caught fire the previous evening.

30 JUNE • The initial naval flight officer class of four Navy, one Marine, and one Air Force students to train in T-6A Texan IIs commenced with VT-10 at NAS Pensacola, Fla.

1 JULY • VF-2 was redesignated VFA-2 as the first squadron to transition from F-14D Tomcats to F/A-18F Super Hornets and relocated from NAS Oceana, Va., to NAS Lemoore, Calif.

10 JULY • A site survey team consisting of F/A-18 Hornet and Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle and F-16 Fighting Falcon pilots and technicians evaluated the feasibility of deploying their aircraft at Djibouti.

17 JULY • VT-9's E-2/C-2 standardization officer, Lt. Charles B. Bassel, performed the last arrested landing of a T-2C Buckeye during carrier qualifications on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

30 JULY • An F/A-18 Hornet carried out the first flight of an integrated APG-79 Active Electronically Scanned Radar at China Lake, Calif.

5 AUGUST • The first student naval flight officer training flight in a T-6A Texan II occurred with VT-10 at NAS Pensacola, Fla.

14 AUGUST • United Nations humanitarian relief workers required protection during their distribution of aid to victims of the fighting in Liberia, and on this date, nine helicopters of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit flew from amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) and transported 200 Marines, together with SEALs and explosive ordnance disposal specialists, to Roberts International Airport, Monrovia.

25 AUGUST • The Marines announced their deployment of the Ramp Mounted Weapon System on board CH-53Es of HMH-461 at Djibouti. The system includes a Fabrique Nationale M3M .50-caliber machine gun.

28 AUGUST • VMX-22 was activated as an MV-22 Osprey operational test and evaluation squadron at MCAS New River, N.C.

3 SEPTEMBER • Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 1 deployed from NS Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and the Horn of Africa, as the first fully formed such group, with amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5) as its principle ship. ESG development provided flexible responses for global power projection. It returned on 9 March 2004.

10 SEPTEMBER • The Navy announced the record of decision concerning the basing of F/A-18E/F Super Hornets. Eight squadrons comprising 96 aircraft and one fleet readiness squadron of 24 jets were to be stationed at NAS Oceana, Va., two squadrons of 24 Super Hornets at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., and construction of an outlying landing field in Washington County, N.C.

18 SEPTEMBER • Hurricane Isabel had already devastated much of the Gulf and East Coasts of the United States, and on this date threatened Hampton Roads, Va. *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) turned from an emergency sortie into the wake of the hurricane to make for NS Norfolk, Va.

Upon arrival, crewmembers assisted storm victims along the Virginia and North Carolina coasts. Isabel also damaged historic naval aircraft preserved at the National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, Fla., and at the Battleship *Alabama* (BB 60) Memorial, Mobile, Ala.

24 SEPTEMBER • Forward-deployed VF-154 relocated from NAF Atsugi, Japan, to NAS Lemoore, Calif., in preparation for its redesignation on 1 October to VFA-154 and transition from F-14A Tomcats to F/A-18F Super Hornets.

30 SEPTEMBER • VMA-231 at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., received the Marine Corps' last remanufactured AV-8B Harrier II, BuNo 166288.

9 OCTOBER • A UH-1Y Venom made its first flight as a fully configured and functional H-1 upgrade at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

31 OCTOBER • The Naval Service Training Command was established at NS Great Lakes, Ill. The move aligned all enlisted and officer training accessions programs, which averaged more than 50,000 trainees annually. The naval aviation commands impacted included Officer Candidate School, Limited Duty Officer and Warrant Officer School, Direct Commissioned Officer School, and Officer Training Command.

13 NOVEMBER • The first four F/A-18F Super Hornets permanently forward deployed arrived at VFA-102, NAF Atsugi, Japan.

21 NOVEMBER • A UH-1Y Venom completed testing at MCB Quantico, Va., of the Special Warfare Kit.

22 NOVEMBER • On board *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67), pilot Lt. Cmdr. Thomas M. Santomauro completed the first carrier landing of an upgraded eight-bladed propeller equipped E-2C Hawkeye.

24 NOVEMBER • The Marines received their final CH-53E Super Stallion, BuNo 165243, at HMH-461, MCAS New River, N.C.



NAVAIR

Developed by the Navy and Marines to replace the EA-6B Prowler, a Marine EA-18G Growler of VX-23 cruises near Patuxent River, Md., during testing in August 2006.

5 DECEMBER • HSL-49 Detachment 4 departed to participate in the second sea swap during the relief of HSL-45 Detachment 6 on board destroyer *Fletcher* (DD 992).

15 DECEMBER • Through 20 December, allied forces seized three dhows and 33 drug smugglers who supported al-Qaeda terrorists. On 15 December, destroyer *Decatur* (DDG 73) intercepted a dhow and detained her 12 crewmen after the discovery of 54 bags of hashish valued at almost \$10 million. Three days later, a New Zealand P-3K Orion located two suspicious dhows and worked with Australian, British, and U.S. aircraft to track the boats across the north Arabian Sea. On 20 December, cruiser *Philippine Sea* (CG 58) backed by a British Royal Air Force Aerospace MR.2 Nimrod intercepted the dhows and seized 21 smugglers, 150-pounds of methamphetamines, and 35- and 50-pound bags of heroin. Analysts used video footage taken by a VP-47 P-3C to verify the smugglers' activities.

17 DECEMBER • An RQ-8A completed the 100th Fire Scout flight at Webster Field, NAS Patuxent River, Md.

18 DECEMBER • The EA-18G received Milestone B approval to proceed into system design and development. The contract covering 2005 to 2009 included a total of 56 aircraft.

2004

6 JANUARY • The E-2 Integrated Test Team announced the completion of flight testing of an eight-bladed NP2000 propeller at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

9 JANUARY • Frigate *McClusky* (FFG 41) and her embarked helicopter from HSL-43 Detachment 6 rescued 169 migrants on board Ecuadorian vessels *The Andrea* and *San Luis* when the ships foundered in the eastern Pacific.

10 JANUARY • *Ex-Midway* (CV 41) arrived to serve as a naval museum and event facility at Broadway Pier, San Diego, Calif.

12 JANUARY • Frigate *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58) and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 403 intercepted a suspicious vessel tracked by the frigate's embarked helicopter from HSL-44 Detachment 7 and seized eight drug traffickers and more than 7,000 pounds of cocaine.

14 JANUARY • Amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4), with aircraft and Marines from I Marine Expeditionary Force embarked, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. *Boxer* arrived in the Persian Gulf on 20 February and returned on 29 April.

19 JANUARY • Amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5), with Marines of II Marine Expeditionary Force embarked, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. *Bataan* returned on 31 March.

23 JANUARY • The Navy announced the signing of an almost \$570 million, second multi-year procurement contract with Northrop Grumman Corp. for E-2C Hawkeye 2000s.

5 FEBRUARY • Boeing Integrated Defense Systems announced the completion of the integration of AGM-84K SLAM-ER (Standoff Land Attack Missile–Expanded Response) into P-3C Orions.

10 FEBRUARY • The Officer Training Command consisting of Officer Candidate School, Limited Duty Officer/Warrant Officer School, and the Direct Commissioned Officer School celebrated its establishment at NAS Pensacola, Fla.

17 FEBRUARY • Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 2 including amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1), with the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, began the first deployment of an East Coast–based ESG. Some of the Marines, including elements of the 2d Marine Aircraft

Wing, later deployed near Kandahar, Afghanistan and fought in Operation Mountain Storm—a preemptive campaign against an anticipated spring offensive by the Taliban. ESG-2 returned on 18 September.

19 FEBRUARY • The Airframe and Powerplant Program was established at CNATT Pensacola, Fla. The program gave Navy aviation technicians the opportunity to earn the Federal Aviation Administration's airframe and powerplant license.

MARCH • During the month, Muslim militants increased their infiltration into Iraq along a route that ran principally across the Syrian mountains and down the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers into Fallujah and Ramadi, west of Baghdad. Navy and Marine aircraft struck these insurgents during Operation Vigilant Resolve. On 9 April, the coalition suspended the operation to allow negotiations, but Fallujah remained an extremist stronghold.

11 MARCH • VX-20 accepted its first T-6A Texan II for testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

21 MARCH • Frigate *Stephen W. Groves* (FFG 29) and her embarked SH-60B Seahawk from HSL-42 Detachment 10 rescued 103 Ecuadorian migrants from their unseaworthy 40-foot fishing boat in the eastern Pacific.

22 MARCH • Greek-flagged tanker *Everton* and Korean-flagged fishing vessel *Chun Ying* collided off the Omani coast, igniting a fire on board the tanker. Cruiser *Yorktown* (CG 48) and her embarked SH-60B Seahawk from HSL-42 Detachment 2 assisted in the multinational search and rescue of 24 of the 25 crewmembers on board *Everton*.

2 APRIL • An Improved Capability (ICAP) III EA-6B Prowler began operational evaluation with VX-9 at NAWS China Lake, Calif.

5 APRIL • The Navy announced the transfer scheduled for June 2005 of *Oriskany* (CV 34) to the state of Florida for use as an artificial reef. The decision marked the first disposal of a carrier in this manner.

7 APRIL • The V-22 Osprey program manager announced the decision to use the MV-22 designation instead of HV-22.

8 APRIL • The Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Command was established to integrate advanced submarine hunting networks at San Diego, Calif.

29 APRIL • Commander Operational Testing and Evaluation Marine Corps recommended the full fleet introduction of the KC-130J Super Hercules for operational use.

6 MAY • Cmdr. Stewart R. Graham, USCG, (Coast Guard Aviator No. 114 and Helicopter Pilot No. 2) was inducted into the Hall of Honor at the National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, Fla. Graham pioneered helicopter development during World War II.

15 MAY • The Department of Defense authorized AIM-9X Sidewinder air-to-air missiles for full-rate production.

17 MAY • A UH-1Y Venom fired weapons for the first time during a test flight at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

27 MAY • *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), with elements of six squadrons from Carrier Air Wing 11 embarked, sailed from NS Norfolk, Va., rounded Cape Horn, and on 23 July reached her new homeport of NAS North Island, Calif. The guests who greeted the arrival of the ship included former First Lady Nancy D. Reagan.

JUNE • During Summer Pulse 04, the Navy tested changes to operational methods that resulted from the Fleet Response Plan. At times, *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), *Enterprise* (CVN 65), *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67), *George Washington* (CVN 73), *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74), *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75), and *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) deployed in five theaters. The operations of these ships extended into September during scheduled deployments, surge operations, and joint and international exercises.

21 JUNE • The V-22 Osprey Integrated Test Team successfully completed the fifth at-sea tests of the aircraft's shipboard suitability on board amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) off the coast of Maryland. The tests resulted in expanded operational wind envelopes and cleared the use of more shipboard spots than previous tests. The evaluations concluded on 29 June.

2004 continued

24 JUNE • A ceremony commemorated the last overhaul of an F-14 at NADEP Jacksonville, Fla. The depot had received the responsibility to rework and repair Tomcats in 1994.

5 JULY • *George Washington* (CVN 73) returned from the Persian Gulf after more than four months of supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Her aircraft had flown strikes into Iraq and participated in maritime interception operations that led to the boarding of more than 200 vessels.

15 JULY • Pilot Lt. j.g. Scott Timmester and radar intercept officer Lt. Cmdr. Mark W. Tankersley of VF-213 made the last firing of an AIM-54C Phoenix long-range air-to-air missile. The Navy continued to phase the weapons from inventory by 30 September. On 17 September 1974, VF-1 and -2 had first deployed with Phoenixes on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65). More than 4,566 had been built.

20 JULY • Aircraft embarked on board *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) in the Persian Gulf struck insurgents threatening Multi-National Corps–Iraq. A VF-103 F-14B Tomcat dropped GBU-12 guided bombs and an F/A-18C Hornet dropped GBU-32s on enemy positions.

23 JULY • The last NF-14D, BuNo 163416, made its final flight with VX-30 at Naval Base Ventura County, Calif. The event marked the conclusion of research, development, test, and evaluation flight operations with Tomcats.

13 AUGUST • The Naval Aerospace Medicine Institute named its Aerospace Medicine Academic Center in honor of naval aviation members Capt. David M. Brown and Laurel B. S. Clark, who died on 1 February 2003 when space shuttle *Columbia* broke apart during reentry.

28 AUGUST • Frigate *Curts* (FFG 38) and her embarked SH-60B Seahawk from HSL-45 Detachment 6 rescued 106 Ecuadorian migrants from foundering smuggling vessel *El Poder de Dios*, 300 miles east of Ecuador.

30 AUGUST • The 200th F/A-18 Super Hornet, a two-seat F model, arrived at VX-9, NAWS China Lake, Calif.

SEPTEMBER • During the middle of the month, Hurricane Ivan devastated the area from Louisiana to Florida, and caused more than \$100 million in damage at

NAS Pensacola, Fla., including 34 display aircraft on the flight line of the National Museum of Naval Aviation. It also forced 3,300 students at NATTC to resume classes in temporary classrooms on 27 September. The Navy issued a stop movement order to all people with orders to stations in the region that remained in effect until early December.

7 SEPTEMBER • Commander Operational Test and Evaluation Force issued the final report on the assessment of EP-3E Aries II Sensor System Improvement Program upgrades, which found them operationally effective and suitable for introduction to VQ-1 and -2.

9 SEPTEMBER • A P-3C from VP-16 spotted a suspected go-fast vessel in the Pacific Ocean and alerted Coast Guard cutter *Jarvis* (WHEC 725). The cutter's HH-65A Dolphin and the Orion observed the smugglers throw contraband overboard, and despite the escape of the boat, *Jarvis* recovered bales of cocaine valued at more than \$40 million.

9 SEPTEMBER • Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 3 conducted a flag-staff crossdeck in the Persian Gulf from amphibious assault ship *Belleau Wood* (LHA 3) to *Essex* (LHD 2). The *Essex* ESG was activated the following day.

17 SEPTEMBER • After surveillance by P-3C Orions from VP-16 and -65, frigate *Curts* (FFG 38), with an embarked SH-60B Seahawk from HSL-45 Detachment 6 and a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment intercepted fishing vessel *Lina Maria* and seized 14 tons of cocaine southwest of the Galapagos Islands.

23 SEPTEMBER • A P-3C Orion from VP-16 vectored frigate *Crommelin* (FFG 37), with an embarked SH-60 Seahawk from HSL-37 Detachment 3 and a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment, to the seizure of smuggling vessel *San Jose* and 13 tons of cocaine west of the Galapagos Islands.

1 OCTOBER • The Navy transferred operation of the Naval Space Surveillance System—used to track satellites and debris orbiting the earth—to the Air Force at Naval Network and Space Operations Command, Dahlgren, Va.

2 OCTOBER • Two joint interceptions involving a Navy P-3C Orion and Coast Guard cutter *Gallatin* (WHEC 721) seized nearly 8,000 pounds of cocaine and eight smugglers

from two go-fast vessels in Columbian waters; the second interception occurred on 8 October. In both instances, *Gallatin's* embarked MH-68A Mako of Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron 10 disabled the boats with gunfire when the smugglers attempted to escape and jettison their contraband.

6 OCTOBER • The first of two RQ-4A Global Hawks allocated for the Navy's Global Hawk Maritime Demonstration Program made its initial flight from Northrop Grumman Corp., Palmdale, Calif., to Edwards AFB, Calif.

22 OCTOBER • The production line for EA-18Gs was activated at Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo.

28 OCTOBER • A prototype Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft, subsequently named Poseidon, began low-speed wind tunnel testing, which concluded on 5 November at Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo. The aircraft, based on Boeing's commercial 737, was designed to operate at up to 41,000 feet with a storage capacity of 120 sonobuoys, 50 percent greater than that of the P-3C. Initial operating capability was scheduled for 2013, and it was to be fully operational by 2019. The Navy intended to purchase up to 108 aircraft to replace Orions.

6 NOVEMBER • The coalition launched Operation Phantom Fury (later renamed Al Fajr, Dawn) to drive insurgents from Fallujah, Iraq. In late October and early November, allied aircraft attacked positions in the city, and on this date, the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing bombed seven separate Iraqi weapons caches in eight hours. On 8 November, soldiers and Marines entered ferocious house-to-house fighting in northern Fallujah. The low cloud ceiling compelled fixed-wing aircraft to fly at lower altitudes and required greater involvement by helicopters. Because insurgents fought from mosques and hospitals, precision-guided munitions proved vital to their defeat while sparing civilians. Al Fajr marked the combat debut of GBU-38 500-pound Joint Direct Attack



An SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-47 lands on board *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in the Indian Ocean in January 2005 during Operation Unified Assistance, a humanitarian relief effort in the wake of a tsunami that devastated South East Asia, 26 December 2004.

Munitions when F/A-18C Hornets of VFA-34, embarked on board *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67), dropped two of the weapons. The battle continued into December.

12 NOVEMBER • The V-22 Integrated Test Team conducted shipboard suitability testing on board amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1) off the mid-Atlantic coast. The testing, which concluded on 23 November, primarily consisted of interaction between two Ospreys during flight operations.



USN 050124-N-0168J-001

Marine Cpl. Tyler Samms and FC3 Bethany A. Deadman (foreground) deployed with amphibious assault ship *Essex* (LHD 2), pass bags of rice for victims of a tsunami at an airfield at Sabang, Indonesia, 24 January 2005.

16 NOVEMBER • Raytheon Missile Systems unveiled the AGM-154C Joint Standoff Weapon to the Navy at Tucson, Ariz.

27 NOVEMBER • A VP-9 P-3C Orion proved instrumental in a multinational search and rescue of eight United Arab Emirates fishermen when their dhow sank off the Bahrain coast.

1 DECEMBER • Lockheed Martin announced receipt of a \$15.6 million contract to integrate Armed Helicopter Mission Kits for MH-60S Seahawks as part of the Navy's armed helicopter program.

2 DECEMBER • A yola carrying 94 Dominican migrants capsized off the northern coast of Puerto Rico. A Coast Guard HU-25 Guardian spotted the distressed vessel and alerted search and rescue forces including three HH-65A

Dolphins from CGAS Borinquen, P.R., cutters *Chincoteague* (WPB 1320) and *Key Largo* (WPB 1324), the Border Patrol, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Into the next day, these teams rescued 85 survivors and recovered the bodies of nine migrants.

4 DECEMBER • Two E-2Cs of VAW-126 deployed from *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) in the Persian Gulf to Kandahar AB, Afghanistan, to provide airborne command and control for the inauguration of President Hamid Karzai. The Hawkeyes returned to the ship on 13 December.

14 DECEMBER • Commander Operational Test and Evaluation Force announced the completion of the operational testing of AGM-154C Joint Standoff Weapons, and their operational effectiveness and suitability for fleet deployment.

26 DECEMBER • A magnitude 9.0 earthquake struck off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, triggering a tsunami across the Indian Ocean littoral that killed more than 230,000 people. Combined Support Force 536 coordinated Operation Unified Assistance—multinational relief efforts. United States naval forces often reached disaster zones before aid agencies, and aircraft delivered supplies and emergency responders to otherwise inaccessible inland areas. On 1 January 2005, four SH-60B Seahawks from HSL-47 and some SH-60Fs and HH-60Hs of HS-2, embarked on board *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72), began to ferry supplies from collection points in Sumatra. Reinforcements at times included amphibious assault ships *Essex* (LHD 2) and *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6); P-3C Orions of VP-4 and -8; VRC-30; HC-11; four MH-53E Sea Dragons from HM-15 Detachment 2; six CH-46E Sea Knights from Okinawa; two MH-60Ss from HC-5, embarked on board combat store ship *Niagara Falls* (T-AFS 3); VMGR-352; and a USCG HC-130H Hercules. Despite earthquake aftershocks, these aircraft flew 1,747 missions, transported 3,043 passengers, and delivered 5.92 million pounds of supplies to people in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. On 3 February, *Abraham Lincoln* departed Indonesian waters, and 11 days later the force ceased relief operations.

2005

27 JANUARY • The EA-18G completed wind tunnel testing. Engineers had validated the F/A-18F Super Hornet airframe for the electronic attack mission during 1,412 hours of testing at Boeing Company and NASA facilities.

30 JANUARY • Aircraft from *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) provided on-call close air support in 32 sorties during the Iraqi national elections.

FEBRUARY • In September 2004, Hurricane Jeanne had devastated Haiti, killing more than 2,000 people and leaving 300,000 homeless. The annual Southern Command exercise Operation New Horizons focused on relief efforts there, and at times through June, amphibious assault ships *Saipan* (LHA 2) and *Nassau* (LHA 4), HC-6, HSC-28, HM-14, and VR-55 took part.

10 FEBRUARY • The Marine Corps announced the passage of the second operational evaluation of the KC-130J at NAWC China Lake, Calif., and MCASs Cherry Point, N.C., and Yuma, Ariz. On 13 February, VMGR-252 began the first Super Hercules deployment during the relief of VMGR-452 in Iraq.

14 MARCH • The Navy announced the designation of the Advanced Hawkeye as E-2D. Designers intended the plane's more powerful radar to elevate it from an airborne early warning platform to a battle management command and control system. Construction began in early April, with plans to procure 75 aircraft and initial operational capability in 2011.

15 MARCH • The first Improved Capability (ICAP) III EA-6B Prowler arrived at VAQ-139 at Northrop Grumman facilities, St. Augustine, Fla.

20 MARCH • *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) relieved *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) in the Persian Gulf. A detachment comprising half the SH-60F and HH-60Hs of HS-8 deployed from *Carl Vinson* to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The Seahawks patrolled southeastern Iraq and flew maritime security operations over the northern Persian Gulf, and returned to the carrier on 29 June.

28 MARCH • VMX-22 began the operational evaluation of the MV-22 Osprey.

30 MARCH • The Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft received the designation P-8A.

18 APRIL • A Joint Common Missile (JCM) completed initial F/A-18E/F Super Hornet integration wind tunnel testing at NASA Ames Research Center, San Jose, Calif., and Boeing Company, Philadelphia, Pa. Super Hornets were intended to carry up to 12 JCMs.

29 APRIL • A multinational force including cruiser *Normandy* (CG 60) and her embarked SH-60 Seahawk of HSL-42 Detachment 1, coastal patrol ships *Firebolt* (PC 10) and *Typhoon* (PC 5), and German frigate *Karlsruhe* (F 212), rescued 89 people from a dhow that capsized in the Gulf of Aden off the Somali coast.

2005 continued

29 APRIL • President George W. Bush signed a memorandum for the Secretary of Defense approving the redesignation of the Naval Reserve to the Navy Reserve.

7 MAY • UH-1Y Venoms and AH-1Z Vipers made their first shipboard landings during testing on board amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5) off the Virginia Capes. Over six days, the two H-1 upgrade aircraft, Y-2 and Z-3, completed 127 and 140 landings and 13.4 and 14.5 flight hours, respectively.

9 MAY • The MH-60R Seahawk entered operational evaluation.

11 MAY • *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) coordinated the rescue of all 27 sailors from Panamanian-flagged merchantman *Olympias* off Iran in the Persian Gulf. An engine room fire had engulfed the ship, and the carrier directed destroyer *Mustin* (DDG 89) and her embarked SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-45 Detachment 5 to the vessel's aid.

12 MAY • Capt. Eugene A. Cernan received NASA's first Ambassador of Exploration Award, which recognizes the sacrifices and dedication of the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo astronauts. Naval aviator Cernan flew three times in space and twice to the moon, and was the second American to walk in space.

14 MAY • *America* (CV 66) was sunk off the East Coast as a live-fire test and evaluation and weapons effects platform for the CVN-21 program.

25 MAY • Ships that surged under the Fleet Response Plan for three months to the European and Central Command areas of responsibility included amphibious assault ship *Saipan* (LHA 2) from NS Norfolk, Va.

1 JUNE • The Naval Test Parachute Team was disestablished at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

18 JUNE • VMX-22 completed the operational evaluation of the MV-22 Osprey.

21 JUNE • An MH-60S Seahawk of HSC-28 Detachment 2, embarked on board amphibious assault ship *Kearsarge* (LHD 3), provided food and fuel to the nine people on

board an Iranian fishing dhow adrift and taking on water in the Persian Gulf. The Iranians refused further assistance.

22 JUNE • Australian S70A-9 Black Hawks of the 5th Aviation Regiment completed more than 1,200 takeoffs and landings in ten days of operations on board amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4) during Exercise Talisman Sabre.

22 JUNE • Instructor Lt. Carl J. Wells of VT-4 and student Ens. Luis Diez flew the last T-34C Turbomenter training flight of Training Wing 6 at NAS Pensacola, Fla.

24 JUNE • Lt. j.g. Jeanine MacIntosh, USCG, became the first African American female aviator in the Coast Guard at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. MacIntosh subsequently flew an HC-130H Hercules from CGAS Barbers Point, Hawaii.

30 JUNE • *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) turned for home from supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and maritime surveillance operations in the Persian Gulf. Aircraft from Carrier Air Wing 9 had logged more than 6,500 sorties during these battles.

7 JULY • The next-generation presidential helicopter received the mission design series designator VH-71A.

22 JULY • An RQ-8B Fire Scout unmanned aerial vehicle test fired two Hydra 2.75-inch unguided rockets at Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz.

28 JULY • The first production MH-60R Seahawk made its initial flight at Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Stratford, Conn.

4 AUGUST • Two F/A-18F Super Hornets under construction were moved from Boeing's St. Louis, Mo., assembly line to a separate hangar for conversion to EA-18Gs.

19 AUGUST • Terrorists of the al-Qaeda-linked Abdullah Azzam Brigades fired three Katyusha-type rockets at amphibious assault ship *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) and dock landing ship *Ashland* (LSD 48) in Al Aqabah, Jordan. The rockets missed the ships moored for the two-week Infinite Moonlight exercise with the Jordanians, but killed one Jordanian sentry and wounded another. The ships left the port but operated in the area until 25 August.



USN 050907-N-6345W-024

Search and rescue swimmer AWC Scott Pierce of HS-75 looks out from an SH-60 Seahawk at New Orleans streets flooded by Hurricane Katrina, 7 September 2005.

29 AUGUST • Hurricane Katrina made landfall along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. A catastrophic storm surge inundated the levees along the Mississippi River and the rising waters flooded 80 percent of New Orleans, La. Six E-2C Hawkeyes from VAW-77, -121, and -126 monitored airspace and directed rescue aircraft. On 30 August, amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5) arrived and augmented two embarked MH-60S Seahawks of HSC-28 with four MH-53E Sea Stallions from HM-15. Meanwhile, amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) moored at New Orleans and became a hub for helicopters as Headquarters, Joint Task Force Katrina. On 1 September, *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) arrived with elements of 13 helicopter squadrons embarked. Additional naval aviation reinforcements included MH-60s of HSL-43, -47, and -49, and HC-11, two CH-46E Sea Knights and six CH-53E Super Stallions from six Marine squadrons at MCAS

New River, N.C., four Super Stallions from HMH-772, and VR-57 and -58. Seventy-six Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary aircraft rescued 12,535 people during 1,817 sorties. Altogether, more than 5,000 Coast Guardsmen saved 33,545 lives. More than 70 fixed wing aircraft and 350 helicopters from all the services responded.

SEPTEMBER • Hurricane Rita struck the Texas coast, and the Navy evacuated all naval installations in that state including NASs Corpus Christi and Kingsville.

1 SEPTEMBER • During the Navy's transformation of forces in Europe, VQ-2 changed homeports from NS Rota, Spain, to NAS Whidbey Island, Wash. Five days later, HC-4 shifted from NAS Sigonella, Sicily, to NS Norfolk, Va.



USN 050910-N-2383B-537

Amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) is moored at New Orleans and serves as a hub for helicopters flying relief missions in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, 10 September 2005.

14 SEPTEMBER • HC-2 Detachment 2 passed the mission of combat logistics in the Naval Forces Central Command area of responsibility to HSC-26 Detachment 1. The change concluded 27 years of an HC-2 detachment at Bahrain.

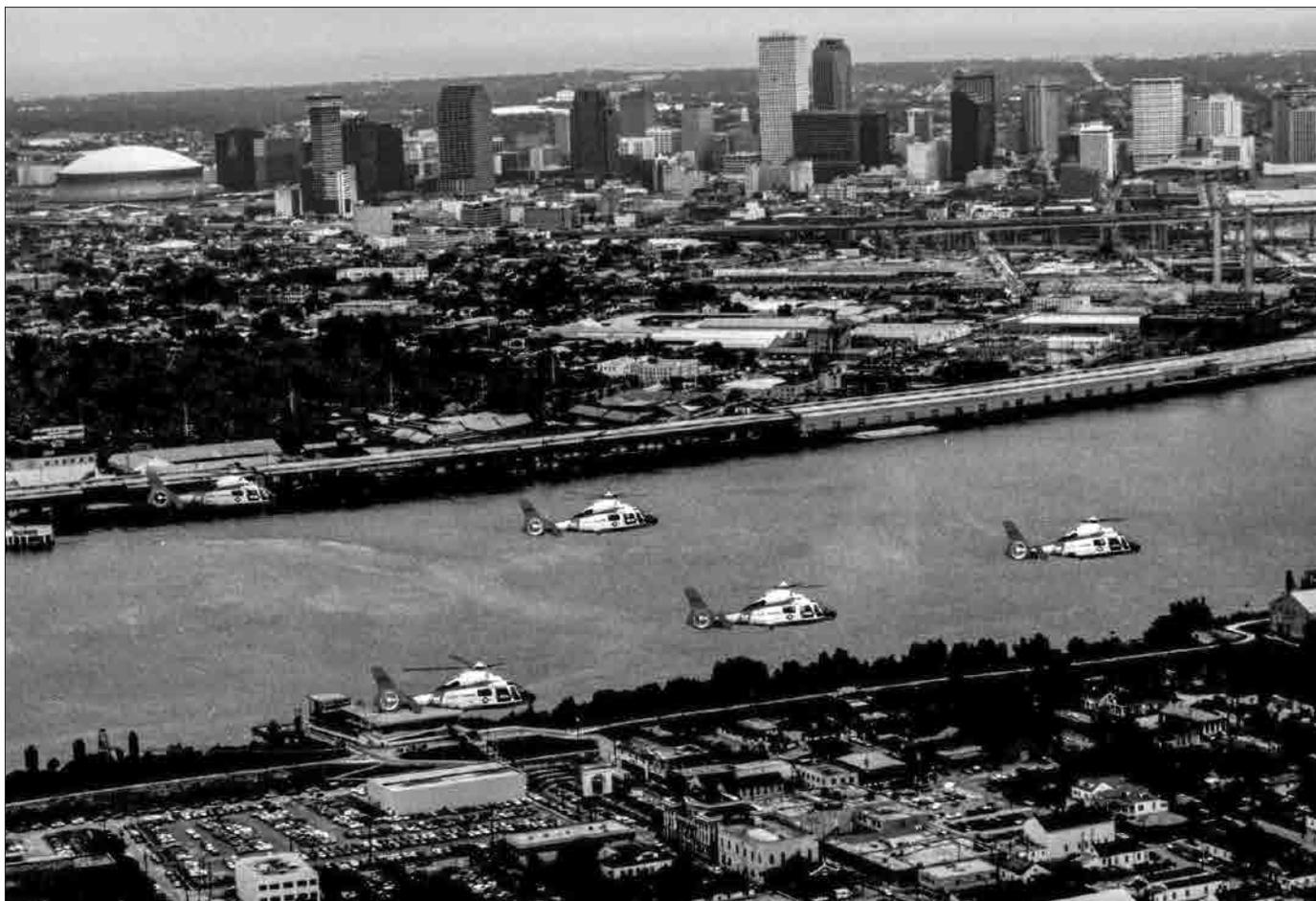
17 SEPTEMBER • While *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) visited Palma de Mallorca, Spain, two VAQ-141 EA-6B Prowlers detached for three weeks to Al Asad, west of Baghdad, Iraq. On 24 September, the Prowlers flew the first of 37 combat sorties in support of VMAQ-1.

28 SEPTEMBER • The Defense Acquisition Board cleared the MV-22 Osprey for full-rate production.

30 SEPTEMBER • Sea Control Wing, Pacific Fleet, was deactivated at NAS North Island, Calif. Sea Control Wing, Atlantic Fleet, assumed the administrative duties for the remaining Pacific VS squadrons.

OCTOBER • Hurricane Wilma ravaged southern Florida and forced the evacuation of NAS Key West. Amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1) supported relief efforts in the area.

8 OCTOBER • A 7.6 magnitude earthquake near the Indo-Pakistani border killed more than 73,000 people and rendered nearly three million homeless. Commander *Tarawa* (LHA 1) Expeditionary Strike Group Rear Adm. Michael A. LeFever coordinated the operations of the Disaster Assistance Center at Islamabad, Pakistan. Through 13 February, two HM-15 MH-53E Sea Dragons, two HSC-26 MH-60S Seahawks, a VQ-2 EP-3E Aries II detachment, a VR-56 C-9B Skytrain, a VR-64 C-130T Hercules, and Army, Air Force, and allied aircraft flew more than 4,000 missions, delivered over 11,000 tons of supplies, and transported more than 18,000 people.



USCG

HH-65As from Coast Guard Air Station New Orleans fly over that city in the early 1990s. A decade later, three Coast Guard Dolphins rescued more than 300 residents in 85 sorties in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

12 OCTOBER • The Air Force Headquarters Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, confirmed the name Growler for the EA-18G.

31 OCTOBER • A Navy and Boeing Company team began a five-day preliminary design review of the P-8A in Seattle, Wash.

4 NOVEMBER • The coalition began Operation al Hajip Elfulathi (Steel Curtain)—an offensive to prevent cells of al-Qaeda terrorists from crossing the Syrian border into Iraq. Aircraft from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) flew reconnaissance and close air support missions with VF-31 and -213 F-14D Tomcats and VFA-15 and -87 F/A-18C Hornets bombing the enemy at Husaybah, Karabilah, and Ubaydi. Her aircraft flew more than 400 sorties through 17 November.

11 NOVEMBER • AV-8Bs of VMA-214 carried out the first Harrier II launches from a ship at sea while carrying

Joint Direct Attack Munitions during operations on board amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5) off Camp Pendleton, Calif.

28 NOVEMBER • A Global Hawk Maritime Demonstrator participated in the first exercise of the system in Trident Warrior '05 off southern California. During the 12-day exercise, the RQ-4A transmitted data to participants on the East Coast including Commander Second Fleet, amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7), and command ship *Mount Whitney* (LCC 20).

LATE NOVEMBER • *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) visited Jebel Ali, and five F/A-18C Hornets of VFA-15 and -87 flew ashore to Al Asad, Iraq. The detachment combined with Marine and Air Force elements, flying an average of eight sorties a day.



USAF 050607-F-WZ2E3-002

The maiden flight of the second of two Navy RQ-4A Global Hawks was made 7 June 2005. The pair are used in the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance–Demonstrator program to refine tactics, techniques, and procedures for large persistent unmanned aerial vehicles in the maritime environment.

2 DECEMBER • The Navy announced the selection of *George Washington* (CVN 73) to relieve *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) in 2008 as the forward-deployed carrier at FSA Yokosuka, Japan.

5 DECEMBER • HSL-41 at NAS North Island, Calif., became the first fleet squadron to receive the MH-60R Seahawk.

8 DECEMBER • The Marine Corps accepted the first production Block B MV-22 Osprey at Amarillo, Texas.

11 DECEMBER • An F-14D of VF-213, embarked on board *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), conducted the first mission of a Tomcat equipped with the Remotely Operated Video Enhanced Receiver system, which allowed a forward ground controller near Baghdad, Iraq, to see real-time images acquired by the Tomcat's sensors.

19 DECEMBER • During flight tests at NAS Patuxent River, Md., an E-2C fitted with a refueling probe connected to a KC-130 tanker to test the Hawkeye's inflight refueling capabilities.

22 DECEMBER • Cruiser *Gettysburg* (CG 64), with her embarked SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-46 Detachment 5 and a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment, intercepted a vessel carrying more than 11 tons of cocaine in the eastern Pacific.

2006

4 JANUARY • *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) made her maiden deployment to the western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Persian Gulf. The cruise also marked the first deployment of Improved Capability (ICAP) III EA-6B Prowlers of VAQ-139, and F/A-18C Hornets and F/A-18E Super Hornets of VFA-22, -25, -113, and -115 equipped with the Remotely Operated Video Enhanced Receiver system.

16 JANUARY • Into the next day, two RQ-8A Fire Scout Vertical Takeoff and Landing Tactical Unmanned Air Vehicles (VTUAV) made nine autonomous landings on board amphibious transport dock *Nashville* (LPD 13) in the sea range off NAS Patuxent River, Md. These operations marked the first time that a major defense autonomous VTUAV had landed on board a fleet ship.

25 JANUARY • The Navy announced the opening for applications from 30 sailors in pay grades E-5 to E-7 for a trial Flying Chief Warrant Officer Program for possible fleet-wide introduction. The program allowed enlisted sailors the opportunity to become aviators in patrol squadrons, helicopter sea combat squadrons, and light helicopter antisubmarine squadrons.

1 FEBRUARY • The P-8A entered the critical design phase.

3 FEBRUARY • A fire erupted on board Egyptian ferry *al Salam Boccaccio* 98 and she sank in the Red Sea, 50 miles off the coast of Egypt. High winds and a sandstorm impeded rescue efforts, but the infrared capabilities of a VP-47 P-3C Orion proved instrumental in the rescue of the 380 survivors of the estimated 96 crewmembers and 1,193 passengers.

8 FEBRUARY • Pilots Capt. William G. Sizemore II, of VF-213 and Lt. Bill Frank of VF-31 flew the last two F-14D Tomcat combat missions from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71). On 13 April, Sizemore's jet, BuNo 161159, arrived for historic preservation at the National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, Fla.

15 FEBRUARY • Expeditionary Strike Group 3 including amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5) deployed from NS San Diego, Calif., to the western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and

Persian Gulf. On 9 July the group returned from operations with the Fifth Fleet.

17 FEBRUARY • Joint Task Force Balikatan 2006, including Expeditionary Strike Group 7 and amphibious assault ship *Essex* (LHD 2), operated with U.S. and Filipino authorities to assist victims of a mudslide on southern Leyte, Philippines. Marine KC-130 Hercules, CH-46E Sea Knights, CH-53E Super Stallions, and UH-1N Iroquois, Army UH-60 Black Hawks, and Air Force C-130 Hercules and C-17A Globemaster IIIs searched for survivors, delivered relief supplies to victims, and provided immediate, life-sustaining support. On 14 March, *Essex* returned to Sasebo, Japan.

3 MARCH • VMM-263 at MCAS New River, N.C., was activated as the first operational MV-22B Osprey squadron.

21 MARCH • The Marine Corps accepted delivery of the final UC-35D Citation Encore, BuNo 166767, at Cessna Aircraft Company, Wichita, Kans.

22 MARCH • The Navy announced the redesignation of Navy Reserve Centers as Navy Operational Support Centers to more accurately describe the integrated role these held in operations.

23 MARCH • The Chief of Naval Air Training began to realign under NAVAIR as part of an effort to create greater efficiency and synchronization while increasing aviation warfighting readiness.

30 MARCH • Lt. Cmdr. William R. McCombs and Lt. Matthew E. Doyle of VX-23 flew an F/A-18F configured as an EA-18G at NAS Patuxent River, Md. The unique Super Hornet included ALQ-218(V)2 electronic warfare tactical receiver pods from an Improved Capability (ICAP) III EA-6B Prowler suite fitted onto the wingtips to contribute to the evaluation of flying qualities, loads, and flutter testing before accepting the initial two preproduction Growlers.

31 MARCH • The Navy approved the MH-60R Seahawk for full-rate production. In December 2005, West Coast Seahawk fleet readiness squadron HSM-41 had received the first four MH-60Rs.



U.S. Navy via Boeing

The first P-8A Poseidon test aircraft, BuNo 167951, (left) is escorted by NP-3C Orion, BuNo 158204, of VX-20 to its landing at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., on 10 April 2010.

4 APRIL • Cruiser *Gettysburg* (CG 64), with an SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-46 Detachment 5 and a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment embarked, returned from a six-month counter-narcotics deployment to the western Caribbean and eastern Pacific. Working with other agencies and P-3C Orions, these teams had seized seven vessels, 40 smugglers, and 750 bales totaling more than 28 metric tons of cocaine and heroin valued at \$1.95 billion.

12 APRIL • A 5.3-pound, 25-inch long Spike tactical precision-guided missile impacted a target during testing at NAWC China Lake, Calif. Spike was designed to arm unmanned aerial vehicles to attack bunkers, small boats, and armored vehicles without inflicting collateral damage on civilians.

27 APRIL • The Navy disestablished the F-14 Tomcat program during a ceremony at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

Grumman had received its initial contract for the aircraft on 3 February 1969, the plane made its first flight on 21 December 1970, and on 14 January 1973, the first squadron F-14As arrived at VF-1. From 17 September 1974 to 20 May 1975, VF-1 and -2 completed the first Tomcat deployment with Carrier Air Wing 14 on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65) to the western Pacific and Indian Oceans. Through 10 July 1992, the Navy accepted 679 Tomcats.

2 MAY • An AH-1W Super Cobra fired two AGM-114N thermobaric Hellfire air-to-ground missiles 30 minutes apart at land test ranges in southern California. The tests evaluated modified flight control software that allowed the Hellfires to fly flatter trajectories and hit targets at a near zero angle for better penetration of buildings and caves, and thus minimize casualties.

2 MAY • *Enterprise* (CVN 65) deployed to the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and western Pacific through 18 November 2006. She operated with four fleets—the Second, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh—and in two linked but distinct wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

17 MAY • The Navy sank *Oriskany* (CV 34) as an artificial reef approximately 24 miles off the coast of NAS Pensacola, Fla.

24 MAY • The Department of Defense Office of Inspector General issued a Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) notification of the failure of the Commonwealth of Virginia and municipal governments of Virginia Beach and Chesapeake, Va., to meet all requirements of the 2005 BRAC law regarding NAS Oceana, Va. The decision enabled the state of Florida to attempt to meet these requirements and allow the potential realignment of the F/A-18 strike fighter wing, aviation operations, and support schools from Oceana to NAS Cecil Field. The notice granted Florida through the end of the year to meet the requirements.

6 JUNE • Amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) deployed from NS Norfolk, Va., for the Mediterranean Sea, Indian Ocean, and Persian Gulf.

26 JUNE • Lockheed EP-3Es upgraded to Spiral 1 of the Joint Airborne Signals Intelligence Architecture Modernization Configuration completed operational evaluation. Three days later the Navy approved an \$18 million full-rate production contract for six of the improved Aries IIs.

29 JUNE • HMM-464 accepted the first restored war reserve CH-53E, BuNo 161542, at MCAS New River, N.C. This was one of three Super Stallions retrieved in August 2005 from the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., and delivered for refurbishment to NADEP Cherry Point, N.C.

3 JULY • During a week-long Rim of the Pacific multinational exercise, VX-20 sailors augmented by the Air Force 452nd Flight Test Squadron flew an RQ-4 Global Hawk Maritime Demonstrator. During four maritime surveillance missions from Edwards AFB, Calif., to Hawaii, the Global Hawks demonstrated their ability to identify

targets in coastal or littoral environments as well as in wide-area maritime search and tracking.

7 JULY • Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley, USAF, announced the name of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter as Lightning II at Lockheed Martin, Fort Worth, Texas. The Department of Defense intended Lightning IIs to replace AV-8B Harrier IIs, Fairchild Republic A-10A Thunderbolt IIs, General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcons, and F/A-18 Hornets.

16 JULY • After Hezbollah terrorists attacked Israeli settlements with rockets, the Israelis began Operation Change of Direction to drive the terrorists from Israel's northern border. On this date, amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7), amphibious transport dock *Nashville* (LPD 13), and dock landing ship *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41), with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, received orders to transit from the Red Sea and operate as part of Task Force 59 for what became Operation Strengthen Hope—the evacuation of Americans from Lebanon. On 23 August, European Command directed Joint Task Force Lebanon to assume the mission performed by Task Force 59, Air Force MC-130P Combat Shadows and MH-53M Pave Lows, and Army CH-47 Chinooks. Naval aviator Vice Adm. John D. Stufflebeem took command of the force from command ship *Mount Whitney* (LCC 20). On 25 August, amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1), with HM-14 Detachment 1 embarked, deployed to the area from NS Norfolk, Va. Amphibious transport dock *Trenton* (LPD 14) also participated in the force that evacuated nearly 15,000 Americans and provided humanitarian assistance to victims of the fighting.

28 JULY • Pilot Lt. Blake C. Coleman and radar intercept officer Lt. Cmdr. David P. Lauderbaugh of VF-31 made the final operational carrier launch of an F-14 Tomcat, in BuNo 163147, from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71).

29 JULY • Two MV-22B Ospreys of VMX-22 completed the tiltrotor's first transatlantic flights by flying from North Carolina to England and back.

3 AUGUST • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael G. Mullen accepted EA-18G Growlers into naval service at the Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo.



USN 061215-N-8053S-228

The first F-35A Lightning II takes off for its maiden flight at Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, 15 December 2006.

5 AUGUST • Frigate *Stephen W. Groves* (FFG 29), with HSL-46 Detachment 8 and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 105 embarked, intercepted a small boat and recovered a metric ton of cocaine in the eastern Pacific. About two tons of cocaine sank with the boat after the drug traffickers set it afire.

15 AUGUST • The EA-18G Growler made its first flight at Lambert International Airport, St. Louis, Mo.

25 AUGUST • Helicopter Landing Trainer *IX-514* logged her 100,000th accident-free landing when a TH-57 Ranger of HT-8 touched down on board in Pensacola Bay, Fla.

18 SEPTEMBER • The Marine Corps accepted the first KC-130T aerial refueler. After several months of flight testing, the Hercules returned to VMGR-234 at NAS JRB Fort Worth, Texas.

19 SEPTEMBER • Amphibious assault ship *Saipan* (LHA 2), with elements of HM-15 on board, successfully completed the first integration of an LHA-class ship in minesweeping operations with an MH-53E Sea Dragon and the Mk 105 magnetic minesweeping system during an exercise in the Persian Gulf.

22 SEPTEMBER • VX-23 received its first EA-18G Growler developmental test aircraft for flight testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

22 SEPTEMBER • After 36 years of service, the Navy retired the F-14 Tomcat in a final flight ceremony at NAS Oceana, Va. On 4 October, an F-14D of VF-31, BuNo 164603, completed the last Tomcat flight from Oceana to Republic Airport, Farmingdale, N.Y. The jet spent just over a year on display at the American Airpower Museum at the airport, and was then assigned for display at Northrop Grumman, Bethpage, N.Y.

2007

2 OCTOBER • VR-54 relieved VR-55 as the Navy's C-130 detachment operating from NSA Bahrain. The detachment continued to operate a single Hercules with two rotational crews.

31 OCTOBER • The Atlantic Fleet and Fleet Forces Command transitioned into Fleet Forces Command, naval aviator Adm. John B. Nathman commanding, during a ceremony on board *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) at NS Norfolk, Va. In May, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael G. Mullen had disestablished Commander, Fleet Forces Command, and Commander, Atlantic Fleet, and redesignated them as Commander, Fleet Forces Command.

3 NOVEMBER • NAS Keflavik, Iceland, was disestablished, marking the conclusion of 45 years of Navy control. In 1941, Marines and sailors had deployed to Iceland to replace British troops and to stave off possible German landings. After World War II, patrol squadrons flew intelligence and surveillance missions on a rotational basis from Keflavik over the North Atlantic. On 1 July 1961, the Navy assumed command of the station from the Air Force. Keflavik held its disestablishment ceremony on 8 September 2006.

3 NOVEMBER • NAVAIR announced the planned installation in 2007 of the Advanced Recovery Control system on board *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76). This replaced mechanical arresting systems and controls with state-of-the-art digital control technology.

30 NOVEMBER • A ceremony marked the delivery of the final upgraded E-6B Mercury at NAS Cecil Field, Fla.

1 DECEMBER • The first group of Aviator Chief Warrant Officers, consisting of ten pilots and four naval flight officers, received their bars as part of the Flying Chief Warrant Officer Program.

15 DECEMBER • The first flight of an F-35A Lightning II took place at Lockheed Martin, Fort Worth, Texas.

20 DECEMBER • An MQ-8B Fire Scout completed its first series of flights at Webster Field Annex, NAS Patuxent River, Md.

7 JANUARY • During fighting between Ethiopians and Muslim extremists in Somalia, an Air Force AC-130 gunship attacked al-Qaeda terrorists at a Somali fishing village near Ras Kamboni on the Kenyan border. The next day, the Fifth Fleet moved *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) to join dock landing ship *Ashland* (LSD 48) and other ships as they searched vessels for terrorists who attempted to escape from Somalia.

16 JANUARY • The Navy named the first of the CVN-21-class aircraft carriers *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78). Designers intended the new ships to replace the *Enterprise* (CVN 65) and *Nimitz* (CVN 68)-classes. *Gerald R. Ford* would raise aircraft sortie capacity by 25 percent, generate three times more electricity than the older ships, and included an improved fully integrated warfare system.

26 JANUARY • The Department of Defense acting inspector general notified the president and Congress that the state of Florida had not met the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission criteria for the move of the Navy's East Coast master jet base from NAS Oceana, Va., to NAS Cecil Field, Fla.

29 JANUARY • The Department of Defense announced the identification of the remains of a Navy pilot lost during the Vietnam War. On 25 June 1965, Cmdr. Peter Mongilardi Jr. launched in an A-4C, BuNo 149574, from *Coral Sea* (CVA 43) on an armed reconnaissance mission over North Vietnam's Thanh Hoa province. Mongilardi's wingman lost visual and radio contact with the Skyhawk amid enemy ground fire and a rainstorm.

30 JANUARY • VX-21 at NAS Patuxent River, Md., announced that MH-60Ss had fired AGM-114 Hellfire air-to-ground missiles for the first-time. The squadron also completed developmental testing of armed helicopter mission kits that doubled the Seahawks' weapons capability from four to eight missiles.

31 JANUARY • NAVAIR awarded Raytheon Company, Tucson, Ariz., a firm fixed-price contract worth more than \$100 million for the third full-rate production of 376 AGM-154C Joint Standoff Weapons and associated equipment.

5 FEBRUARY • President George W. Bush delivered his fiscal 2008 defense budget request and 2007 emergency supplemental request of \$484 billion to Congress. Procurement requests for the Navy totaled \$39 billion with \$14 billion for shipbuilding including *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78), and \$13 billion for aircraft procurement including 24 F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, 18 EA-18G Growlers, and six F-35 Lightning IIs.

6 FEBRUARY • NAVAIR awarded a \$16 million contract to Northrop Grumman Corporation, San Diego, Calif., for two additional MQ-8B Fire Scouts.

6 FEBRUARY • President George W. Bush announced the creation of Africa Command. The unified command highlighted the region's growing strategic importance and held responsibility for the entire continent with the exception of Egypt and its adjacent islands, which fell under the cognizance of Central Command. Africa Command was activated on 1 October 2008.

8 FEBRUARY • The 54-aircraft fleet of MV-22 Ospreys was grounded through 27 February for evaluation after a computer chip malfunction in subzero temperatures.

1 MARCH • The first Block 20 RQ-4A and the 17th Global Hawk built, designated AF-8, completed its maiden flight from Northrop Grumman Corp. Palmdale, Calif.

6 MARCH • HSC-85 held a retirement ceremony for the Navy's last H-3 at Coronado, Calif. The squadron had flown Sea Kings for 37 years for search and rescue missions, as well as to launch and recover mobile antisubmarine warfare targets and torpedoes.

9 MARCH • Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation of Stratford, Conn., announced the delivery of the 100th MH-60S Seahawk to the Navy.

16 MARCH • The Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo., delivered the 200th T-45C to the Navy. More than 3,000 Navy and Marine pilots had undergone training on Goshawks at NAS Meridian, Miss., and NAS Kingsville, Texas. Navy procurement plans called for at least 23 additional aircraft.

21 MARCH • AH-1W Super Cobra pilot Maj. William D. Chesarek Jr., USMC, received the British Distinguished Flying Cross from Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, England. In 2006, Chesarek was an exchange pilot with the Royal Navy's 847 Naval Air Squadron in Iraq. During a battle near Al Amarah on 10 and 11 June 2006, he flew a Lynx AH.7, providing communications relay support to British troops, and airlifted a wounded soldier to safety.

30 MARCH • The Navy announced the change of homeports for *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) in early 2010 from Norfolk, Va., to San Diego, Calif. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review prompted the move because of the strategic reassessment for the presence of six of the 11 carrier strike groups in the Pacific. *Carl Vinson* joined *Nimitz* (CVN 68) and *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) already berthed at NAS North Island.

31 MARCH • The first KC-130J Super Hercules in the Pacific arrived to serve as a maintenance trainer with VMGRT-152 at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa.

9 APRIL • The initial EA-18G Growler arrived for testing at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.

19 APRIL • Frigate *Rodney M. Davis* (FFG 60) and her embarked Coast Guard law enforcement detachment intercepted fishing vessel *Mariana de Jesus* in the eastern Pacific. The arrival of a maritime patrol aircraft overhead had panicked the ship's master and crew and they had abandoned the vessel and the 31 migrants on board. *Rodney M. Davis* assisted and transferred the migrants to the El Salvadoran Navy. Four days later, the frigate and Costa Rican Coast Guard vessel *Juan Rafael Mora* intercepted fishing vessel *Kuerubin* and 61 Chinese migrants en route from Ecuador to Guatemala. The smugglers also abandoned the migrants after a maritime patrol aircraft flew over, and the frigate transferred the people to *Juan Rafael Mora*.

20 APRIL • EA-18G Growlers completed the first phase of test and evaluation.

26 APRIL • HSL-45 Detachment 4 deployed to the eastern Pacific with frigate *McClusky* (FFG 41) during the first Navy deployment of the Airborne Use of Force doctrine against drug traffickers. Coast Guard helicopters had hitherto employed the doctrine, which involved using snipers equipped

with .50-caliber rifles capable of disabling fire. At one point, *McClusky* and embarked Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments 101 and 103 confiscated 12 tons of cocaine with an estimated value of \$306 million. HSL-45 Detachment 4 returned to NAS North Island, Calif., on 22 October 2007.

30 APRIL • Northrop Grumman unveiled its first System Design and Development E-2D Advanced Hawkeye.

3 MAY • Retired Capt. Walter M. Schirra Jr., one of the original seven Mercury astronauts, died at the age of 84.

3 MAY • The Broad Area Maritime Surveillance Unmanned Aircraft System source selection process formally began. Based on the RQ-4B Global Hawk, the system was designed to conduct maritime surveillance, collect enemy order-of-battle information, provide battle damage assessment, port surveillance, and communications relay.

5 MAY • The U. S. Court of Federal Claims upheld the Secretary of Defense's 1991 termination of the A-12A Avenger contract for default by McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics. Unless the ruling was overruled on appeal, the action required the companies to repay the government \$2.6 billion.

11 MAY • The BLU-126/B Low Collateral Damage Bomb was cleared for deployment by NAVAIR. The precision strike weapon is externally identical to the 500-pound BLU-111, but contains less explosives to reduce fragmentation patterns and blast radii.

15 MAY • The Navy christened auxiliary dry cargo ship *Richard E. Byrd* (T-AKE 4) at General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, San Diego, Calif. The ship honored early aviation pioneer Rear Adm. Richard E. Byrd Jr.

18 MAY • VFA-213 became the first Navy fleet squadron to fly an F/A-18F Super Hornet retrofitted with an aft cockpit Joint Helmet-Mounted Cueing System.

23 MAY • *Nimitz* (CVN 68), *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74), and amphibious assault ship *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6) led seven other ships through the Strait of Hormuz into the Persian Gulf for an exercise to demonstrate U.S. resolve. The exercise concluded on 6 June.

25 MAY • HT-28 was activated as a third advanced helicopter training command at NAS Whiting Field, Fla.

29 MAY • Boeing Integrated Defense Systems, St. Louis, Mo., completed developmental flight testing of its Integrated GPS Anti-Jam System for Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs), at NAWC China Lake, Calif. The system maintained JDAM precision under different mission and GPS jamming situations.

30 MAY • The Department of Defense announced the identification of the remains of a serviceman missing in action from the Vietnam War. On 14 December 1966, Lt. Michael T. Newell of VF-194 launched in an F-8E Crusader, BuNo 149148, from *Ticonderoga* (CVA 14) during a raid on a vehicle depot at Van Dien, North Vietnam. A surface-to-air missile burst near Newell, and his wingman did not see a parachute or hear an emergency beacon signal.

31 MAY • The Department of Defense announced that MQ-8B Fire Scouts had reached Milestone C, signifying the start of the low-rate initial production phase.

4 JUNE • VMGR-152 received its first KC-130J Super Hercules at MCAS Futenma, Okinawa.

8 JUNE • Space shuttle *Atlantis* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-117. Naval aviator Col. Frederick W. Sturckow, USMC, commanded the mission to the International Space Station. On 22 June, *Atlantis* returned to Edwards AFB Calif.

10 JUNE • Training Wing 2 celebrated the 500,000th training hour in T-45 Goshawks at NAS Kingsville, Texas.

13 JUNE • The MV-22 achieved initial operational capability and became ready for expeditionary operations with the Osprey's first combat squadron, VMM-263.

14 JUNE • An RQ-4A completed the 1,000th Global Hawk flight.

15 JUNE • NAVAIR announced the completion of the critical design review of the P-8A, a necessary step before production of the first test Poseidons.



NAVAIR

A Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey demonstrates its capabilities in extreme brownout conditions during testing in 2007 at the Army Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz.

25 JUNE • The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition authorized full-rate production of Block II F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and EA-18G Growlers equipped with the AESA aircraft radar system.

1 JULY • About 55 candidates of Officer Candidate School class 20-07 began to check in as the final class of candidates to train at NAS Pensacola, Fla. As part of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission process, Officer Training Command Pensacola started to transition to Newport, R.I.

3 JULY • Maj. Rich Marigliano, USMC, AgustaWestland test pilot Dick Trueman, and flight engineers Clive Bowditch and Richard Parkes completed the maiden flight of VH-71A test aircraft TV-2, for the presidential helicopter at AgustaWestland's test facility, Yeovil, England.

10 JULY • A Marine MV-22B landed on a foreign ship for the first time when an Osprey embarked on board British carrier *Illustrious* (R 06), in preparation for exercise Bold Step off the East Coast. Two days later, detachments from VMA-223, -513, and -542 embarked the British ship, and at times, 14 AV-8B Harrier IIs operated from her. Thirty ships and submarines from five countries—including *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69), *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), *Illustrious*, amphibious assault ships *Wasp* (LHD 1) and *Bataan* (LHD 5), dock landing ship *Oak Hill* (LSD 51), and amphibious transport dock *Shreveport* (LPD 12)—participated in the exercise, which concluded on 28 July.

23 JULY • Naval aircraft and ships including Coast Guard cutters *Diligence* (WMEC 616), *Dolphin* (WPB 87354), and *Knight Island* (WPB 1348), buoy tender *Elm* (WLB 204), and an HH-65A Dolphin from CGAS Miami, Fla., assisted in the interception of 94 Cuban migrants between the Bahamas and Florida in six events. Officials detained some, but repatriated most of the migrants to Cuba.

27 JULY • Two F/A-18D Hornets from VMFA(AW)-121 destroyed an Iraqi insurgent van and a sedan with an AGM-65E Maverick air-to-ground missile and a GBU-51/B laser-guided bomb with the BLU-126/B low-collateral damage explosive, respectively. The action marked the first time that naval aircraft had dropped the BLU-126/B in battle. On 12 August, naval aircraft made a second similar attack against Iraqi insurgents.

3 AUGUST • Lt. Drew Ballinger, Northrop Grumman test pilot Tom Boutin, and flight test weapon system operator Ziad Hajo completed the first flight of an E-2D Advanced Hawkeye test aircraft at St. Augustine, Fla.

3 AUGUST • The Navy awarded Northrop Grumman Corporation a six-year, \$635.8 million contract to conduct the first at-sea launches and recoveries of X-47B Unmanned Combat Air System aircraft. The program was intended to validate the capabilities of autonomous, low-observable aerial vehicles, and planned two initial vehicles, with the first to fly in late 2009 and in 2013 to undertake carrier flight operations.

4 AUGUST • During a ceremony in Grand Haven, Mich., to commemorate the Coast Guard's 217th birthday, the service announced that it had saved an estimated 1,109,310 lives since 7 August 1789 when the first Congress federalized existing lighthouses built by the colonies.

8 AUGUST • Space shuttle *Endeavour* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-118. During this 22nd shuttle flight to the International Space Station, crewmembers Cmdr. Scott J. Kelly, Col. Charles O. Hobaugh, USMC, and Col. Benjamin A. Drew Jr., USAF—who had completed naval test pilot school—had naval aviation experience. *Endeavour* returned to earth on 21 August.

14 AUGUST • Amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1) deployed to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf with ten MV-22Bs from VMM-263 embarked during the first combat deployment of Ospreys. The Ospreys flew to Al Aqabah, Jordan, and then to Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. The MV-22Bs hauled troops and equipment between forward operating bases, and on 6 December landed Marines and Iraqi troops on a raid near Lake Tharthar, about 150 miles north of Baghdad. *Wasp* returned to Norfolk, Va., on 20 December.

SEPTEMBER • The Navy accepted its 3,000th AGM-154 Joint Standoff Weapon (JSOW) from Raytheon Co., Tucson, Ariz. Naval and Air Force aircraft had dropped more than 400 JSOWs in battle.

SEPTEMBER • A KC-130T from VMGR-234 flew a Navy RQ-8B Fire Scout from Northrop Grumman's Unmanned Systems Center, Moss Point, Miss., for flight testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md. This was the first such flight in a Marine Hercules.

4 SEPTEMBER • Hurricane Felix devastated northeastern Nicaragua. U.S.-led international relief forces, including amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1) and frigate *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58), played a major role. Prior to continuing eastward to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf, *Wasp* airlifted more than 125,000-pounds of relief supplies and evacuated 34 people. Joint Task Force Bravo coordinated efforts by the two SH-60B Seahawks from HSL-48 Detachment 7 embarked on board *Samuel B. Roberts*, and Army, Navy, and Marine helicopters including MH-53E Sea Dragons, MH-47 Chinooks, and UH-60 Black Hawks that flew dozens of missions into an airfield at Puerto Cabezas. An Air Force C-130 from Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., and a Marine Hercules arrived later with additional supplies. Relief efforts continued to 18 September.

24 SEPTEMBER • The Boeing Company delivered the first production EA-18G, constructor number G-1, to the Navy at St. Louis, Mo. The Growler consequently joined the flight test program at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

26 SEPTEMBER • Destroyer *James E. Williams* (DDG 95), with an SH-60B from HSL-44 Detachment 9 embarked, assisted Tanzanian-flagged passenger ferry *Spice Islander I* off the Somali coast. With no fuel on board and little food

and water while en route without passengers from Oman to Tanzania, the ferry was adrift in pirate-infested waters. The Seahawk directed destroyer *Stout* (DDG 55) to the scene, which took the ferry in tow and provided the mariners with food, water, and fuel to continue their voyage.

30 SEPTEMBER • Jazirat at Ta'ir (Bird Mountain), a volcano about 70 miles off the Yemen coast, erupted and collapsed part of the island, destroying a Yemeni coast guard station. A NATO convoy of six ships sailing toward the Suez Canal—including destroyer *Bainbridge* (DDG 96) and allied frigates Canadian *Toronto* (FFH 333), Danish *Olfert Fischer* (F 355), Dutch *Evertsen* (F 805), and Portuguese *Álvares Cabral* (F 331)—diverted and rescued two survivors and recovered four bodies through 1 October.

5 OCTOBER • The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs named the Federal Health Care Facility at NS Great Lakes, Ill., in honor of astronaut and naval aviator James A. Lovell Jr.

9 OCTOBER • The Boeing Co. delivered the first factory-installed, dual-cockpit F/A-18F Super Hornet Joint Helmet-Mounted Cueing System to VX-9 at NAWC China Lake, Calif.

22 OCTOBER • Santa Ana winds drove 23 wild fires across 12 southern Californian counties. Marines evacuated more than 40 aircraft from MCAS Miramar, and all the armed forces aided civilian firefighters. Commander Maritime Strike Wing Pacific established the Helicopter Coordination Center at NAS North Island. The center coordinated aircraft including a VP-46 P-3C Orion, MH-60S Seahawks from HSC-3 and -85, SH-60Fs from HS-4 and -6, HSL-45 SH-60Bs, Marine CH-46E Sea Knights and CH-53E Super Stallions from Camp Pendleton and Miramar, and a UH-1N Iroquois from NAS Fallon, Nev. Other facilities including NAS North Island accommodated evacuees. Ships involved in firefighting included *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), amphibious assault ships *Boxer* (LHD 4), *Peleliu* (LHA 5), and Pre-Commissioning Unit *Makin Island* (LHD 8), and amphibious transport dock *Cleveland* (LPD 7). Firefighters contained the blazes by 3 November.

23 OCTOBER • Space shuttle *Discovery* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-120.

The pilot of this 120th shuttle flight and the 23rd to the International Space Station was U.S. Naval Academy graduate and former F/A-18 Hornet pilot Col. George D. Zamka, USMC. *Discovery* returned to earth on 7 November.

25 OCTOBER • An RQ-2 flew the final Pioneer unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) operational training flight at NAS Whiting Field's outlying Choctaw Field, Navarre, Fla. Planners intended Shadow 200 unmanned aerial systems to replace Pioneers, and on 7 August 2008, Training Wing 6 UAV Detachment deactivated to allow the Army to oversee Shadow training at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. Beginning with VC-6 Detachment 1's deployment on board battleship *Iowa* (BB 61) on 10 September 1987, Pioneers had flown more than 50,000 flight hours of which nearly half—23,000—were during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

31 OCTOBER • A groundbreaking ceremony heralded the opening of the Growler Support Center at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash. The facility accommodated 24 consultants to aid the transition from EA-6B Prowlers to EA-18G Growlers.

NOVEMBER • An Air Force C-17A Globemaster III delivered VH-71A test aircraft TV-2 from AgustaWestland in the United Kingdom for testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md. TV-5 followed in December.

NOVEMBER • The Navy announced the completion at General Atomics, Rancho Bernardo, Calif., of the final critical design review of the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System intended to equip *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78)-class carriers.

5 NOVEMBER • Amphibious assault ship *Tarawa* (LHA 1), with Marines of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, sailed on her 14th and final deployment from San Diego, Calif. The ship supported Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, visited four continents, and provided humanitarian relief to people in Bangladesh and Djibouti. *Tarawa* returned on 3 June 2008, and was decommissioned after 32 years of service on 31 March 2009.

17 NOVEMBER • Destroyer *Oscar Austin* (DDG 79) of the *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) Carrier Strike Group completed intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance testing of a ScanEagle long-endurance fully autonomous unmanned

aerial vehicle while en route to the Middle East. ScanEagles had previously completed at-sea testing principally on board amphibious and high-speed ships.

22 NOVEMBER • Medal of Honor recipient Col. Jefferson J. DeBlanc, USMC (Ret.), died in Lafayette, La. The fighter pilot and ace received the award for his actions against the Japanese off Kolombangara Island in the Solomons Group during World War II.

27 NOVEMBER • Lt. Gen. Thomas H. Miller Jr., USMC (Ret.), died in Arlington, Va. Miller served in World War II, impacted naval aviation's early transition into the jet age, and in 1968 flew an AV-8A Harrier with Lt. Col. Clarence M. Baker, USMC, in the United Kingdom.

2 DECEMBER • AW1 Robert Antonucci and AD1 John Fuller of HSL-43, and AW2 John Barile of HSL-45, were commissioned through the Flying Chief Warrant Officer Program at NAS North Island, Calif.

11 DECEMBER • The Navy marked the production of the first P-8A Poseidon at Spirit AeroSystems, Wichita, Kan.

12 DECEMBER • The Army and Navy signed a five-year, multi-service \$11.6 billion contract for the delivery of 537 UH-60M Black Hawk, HH-60M, and MH-60R/S Seahawk helicopters, with options for an additional 263 aircraft, spares, and kits from Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Stratford, Conn.

13 DECEMBER • The Navy inaugurated an unmanned aerial systems (UAS) airstrip at Armitage Field, NAWC China Lake, Calif. Two Cobra unmanned systems used to test future UAS capabilities flew missions from the 2,200-by-50-foot asphalt strip.

15 DECEMBER • Amphibious transport dock *Mesa Verde* (LPD 19) was commissioned at Panama City, Fla. She was the first man-of-war so named and honored Mesa Verde National Park, Colo.

20 DECEMBER • CWO2s Dale Courtney and Adam Rittierodt of VP-30, who received their wings as naval flight officers (NFO), were two of the initial applicants of the Flying Chief Warrant Officer Program at NAS Jacksonville,

Fla. German Lts. 2d Grade Christian Hegemann and Patrick Leisner also received NFO wings.

2008

3 JANUARY • While *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) conducted JTFEX 03-08 off southern California, the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California ordered further limitations on mid-frequency sonar use because of its potential effect upon sea creatures. The Navy announced that the restrictions “created a significant and unreasonable risk” that impacted sonar training. President George W. Bush noted that, with the provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 27 October 1972, continuing the exercise concerned “the paramount interests of the United States.” On 16 January, Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter signed a decision of memorandum agreeing to alternative arrangements that included 29 voluntary adaptive management measures.

5 JANUARY • An irrigation canal ruptured and water inundated several hundred houses in Fernley, Nev. Lt. Brent Hardgrave led two HH-1N Iroquois from NAS Fallon, about 30 miles away, that rescued 18 people, and Coast Guard HC-130Hs delivered food and water to victims.

22 JANUARY • An HSM-71 MH-60R completed the Seahawk variant’s first at-sea operations through 25 January while embarked on board destroyer *Preble* (DDG 88) off California.

25 JANUARY • The Navy announced requirements for the Active Duty Flying Chief Warrant Officer Pilot Program in NavAdmin 020/08. Among them, sailors were required to receive commissions by their 27th birthdays, possess associate or higher degrees, and maintain physical fitness for aviation duties.

11 FEBRUARY • Sailors consigned the ashes of nine Navy veterans including astronaut Capt. Walter M. Schirra Jr. to the Pacific during a ceremony on board *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76).

22 FEBRUARY • HS-7, embarked on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75), and auxiliary dry cargo ship *Sacagawea*

(T-AKE 2) rescued ten Iraqis from sinking Korean-flagged tanker *Nadi* in the Persian Gulf. The next day, HS-7 transferred the rescued mariners to British dock landing ship *Cardigan Bay* (L 3009) for their return to the Iraqi Navy.

27 FEBRUARY • The third helicopter built for the VH-71A Presidential Helicopter Replacement Program, TV-3, made its initial flight at Yeovil, England.

1 MARCH • Amphibious transport dock *New York* (LPD 21) was christened at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, New Orleans, La. The ship’s name honored the state, city, and victims of 9/11. Her hull contained 7½ tons of steel salvaged from the wreckage of the World Trade Center.

3 MARCH • Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter announced the name of the eighth *Lewis and Clark*-class auxiliary dry cargo ship as *Wally Schirra* (T-AKE 8) in honor of astronaut and naval aviator Capt. Walter M. Schirra Jr.

13 MARCH • Director Navy Staff Vice Adm. John D. Stufflebeem announced the change of homeports for *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) from Yokosuka, Japan, to Bremerton, Wash., effective 31 January 2009 in preparation for her decommissioning.

23 MARCH • Fishing vessel *Alaska Ranger* sank during a storm in the Bering Sea, about 125 miles west of Dutch Harbor, Alaska. Aircraft and ships that responded included a Coast Guard HH-60J Jayhawk, cutter *Munro* (WHEC 724) and her embarked HH-65A Dolphin, two HH-130H Hercules from Elmendorf AFB, and fishing vessel *Alaska Warrior*, which collectively rescued 42 of the 47 crewmembers.

7 APRIL • *George Washington* (CVN 73), with Carrier Air Wing 17 embarked, sailed from NS Norfolk, Va., to relieve *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) at Yokosuka, Japan.

22 APRIL • The Navy awarded Northrop Grumman Corp. a system development and demonstration contract for Broad Area Maritime Surveillance unmanned aerial systems. The \$1.16 billion cost-plus-award-fee contract was to develop a persistent maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance data collection and dissemination capability using RQ-4B Global Hawks.

2008 continued

24 APRIL • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead announced the reestablishment of the Fourth Fleet, Rear Adm. Joseph D. Kernan commanding, at NS Mayport, Fla. This was to address the increasing role of maritime forces in the Naval Forces Southern Command area of operations, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

28 APRIL • The Navy announced the deletion of AGM-119B Penguin air-to-ground missiles from inventory.

2 MAY • Cyclone Nargis caused widespread flooding along the Irrawaddy Delta and coast of Myanmar (Burma). International ships that rushed to the area as part of Joint Task Force Caring Response included amphibious assault ship *Essex* (LHD 2), amphibious transport dock *Juneau* (LPD 10), and dock landing ship *Harpers Ferry* (LSD 49), with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked. The U.S. ships left some of their aircraft behind in Thailand and on 13 May arrived off Myanmar. The country's ruling junta rejected aid offers and, on 5 June, Commander Pacific Command Adm. Timothy J. Keating directed the ships to leave. The next day, two Marine C-130 Hercules flew 70 UN relief tents from Medan, Indonesia, to Thailand, from where aid workers shipped the tents and other vital supplies to the cyclone victims.

10 MAY • The Navy christened destroyer *Stockdale* (DDG 106) at Bath Iron Works, Maine. The ship honored Vice Adm. James B. Stockdale (Ret.), the highest ranking naval prisoner held by the North Vietnamese and a recipient of the Medal of Honor.

13 MAY • The EA-18G Growler Support Center opened at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.

22 MAY • A fire erupted on board *George Washington* (CVN 73) while conducting an underway replenishment with frigate *Crommelin* (FFG 37) in the Pacific. The ships performed an emergency breakaway and sailors fought the blaze for 12 hours during which 38 *George Washington* crewmembers received treatment for injuries. The fire apparently resulted from the ignition of improperly stowed refrigerant compressor oil and delayed *George Washington* en route to relieve *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) in Japan. In August, *George Washington* relieved *Kitty Hawk* at NAS North Island, Calif.

11 JUNE • BAE Systems, Inc. test pilot Graham Tomlinson flew an F-35B for the first flight of the short takeoff/vertical landing Lightning II at Lockheed Martin, Fort Worth, Texas.

20 JUNE • The Department of Defense announced the identification of the remains of a pilot missing in action from the Vietnam War and his return for interment. On 4 August 1967, Lt. j.g. Ralph C. Bisz of VA-163 launched in an A-4E, BuNo 150052, from *Oriskany* (CVA 34) to bomb a North Vietnamese petroleum depot near Haiphong. An enemy surface-to-air missile shot down the Skyhawk near Hai Duong in Hai Hung province.

23 JUNE • The U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review a preliminary injunction that restricted the Navy's ability to train realistically with sonar in Californian waters.

25 JUNE • *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) supported relief efforts to victims of Typhoon Fengshen on Panay, Philippines. HS-4 HH-60H and SH-60F Seahawks flying from the carrier; and SH-60Bs from HSL-43 embarked on board destroyer *Howard* (DDG 83), HSL-37 deployed with frigate *Thach* (FFG 43), and HSL-49 embarked on board cruiser *Chancellorsville* (CG 62); delivered food and water to people in the area. Two VRC-30 C-2A Greyhounds flew rice and water from the carrier to Santa Barbara Airport, Iloilo. *Ronald Reagan* departed from the Sulu Sea on 3 July.

27 JUNE • Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter announced the name *America* for the lead ship (LHA 6) and class of amphibious assault ships, the fourth vessel in the fleet to honor the name.

12 JULY • VMU-3, Lt. Col. James W. Frey, USMC, commanding, was activated at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif. The squadron flew reconnaissance missions, assisted in deployments and training, and rotated with VMU-1 and -2 at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. The Marines also announced their receipt of RQ-7B unmanned aerial vehicles that used the Shadow 200 system.

14 JULY • The Navy announced the award of a \$48 million contract for six aircraft from Hawker Beechcraft Corporation, Wichita, Kan., to replace Marine UC-12 Huron twin-engine utility aircraft.

17 JULY • The Navy acknowledged the award of a \$232 million system development and demonstration contract for the Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) from Raytheon Company, Fullerton, Calif. Plans called for JPALS to integrate into naval landing systems, and for F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, EA-18G Growlers, and MH-60R/S Seahawks to be the lead aircraft during evaluations.

23 JULY • Lt. Jeff Millar of VX-9 and Lt. Elizabeth Somerville of VX-31 completed the first EA-18G Growler live fire of an AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-To-Air Missile against a BQM-74E target drone at NAWCWD China Lake, Calif.

31 JULY • EA-18G Growlers completed sea trials through 5 August on board *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) in the Atlantic.

4 AUGUST • The Department of Defense announced the identification of the remains of a sailor missing in action from the Vietnam War and his return for interment. On 8 October 1963, HM3 Manuel R. Denton was one of six men killed on board a UH-34D Seahorse shot down by ground fire during a search and rescue mission over Quang Nam province, South Vietnam. Searchers recovered four men, but failed to locate Denton and LCpl. Luther E. Ritchey Jr., USMC.

7 AUGUST • VC-6, which had operated BQM-74E aerial target drones and RQ-2A Pioneer unmanned aerial vehicles, was deactivated at NS Norfolk, Va. This enabled the Army to oversee Shadow 200 UAS training to replace Pioneers at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

7 AUGUST • Operation Assured Delivery began—humanitarian assistance to victims of the fighting between the Russians, Georgians, and South Ossetians in the Caucasus. From 13 August to 10 September, Navy C-9B Skytrain, C-40A Clipper, and C-130 Hercules, and Air Force C-17A Globemaster IIIs flew 1,145 short tons of supplies from Ramstein AFB, Germany to Tbilisi, Georgia. Command ship *Mount Whitney* (LCC 20), destroyer *McFaul* (DDG 74), and Coast Guard cutter *Dallas* (WHEC 716) also provided aid via Bat'umi and Poti.

8 AUGUST • Deputy Commandant for Marine Aviation Lt. Gen. George J. Trautman III, USMC, announced that UH-1Y Venoms had achieved their initial operating capability.

11 AUGUST • The crew of Pre-Commissioning Unit *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77) began to move on board the ship at Northrop Grumman shipyard, Newport News, Va.

15 AUGUST • The High Speed Anti-Radiation Demonstration project displayed the maturity of an integral rocket-ramjet propulsion system at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. The objectives included a flight test of a near tactically configured vehicle.

16 AUGUST • A fire broke out in a cargo hangar at Tocumen International Airport in Panama during Southern Command exercise Fuerzas Aliadas Panamax 2008. Deputy maritime patrol aircraft commander Cmdr. Sam Sorgen for Commander Task Force 805, and his operations officer, Cmdr. Douglas Rosado, discovered the blaze and together with Air Force, Columbian, and Panamanian servicemembers saved up to eight aircraft from destruction.

22 AUGUST • The Navy celebrated the end of the North American T-2 program and its 3.4 million hours flight time with a sundown ceremony and fly-by at the Mustin Beach Officer's Club, NAS Pensacola, Fla. VT-86 made the final Buckeye training flights.

26 AUGUST • Hurricane Gustav made landfall on the southwestern peninsula of Haiti. The tempest swept across the Caribbean and on 1 September struck Cocodrie, La. VR-53 flew rescue workers and equipment to the Gulf Coast.

28 AUGUST • The Navy and Air Force signed a memorandum of agreement to streamline their joint acquisition processes regarding RQ-4 Global Hawks, and to pursue common objectives concerning the development and introduction of the unmanned aerial vehicles.

SEPTEMBER • VAQ-133 deployed to Bagram AB, Afghanistan. The squadron returned on 21 March 2009.

3 SEPTEMBER • The Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System reached the 10,000 High Cycle Testing, Phase 1 milestone, at General Atomics, Tupelo, Miss.

8 SEPTEMBER • Naval aviator Nathan G. Gordon, 92, died at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Little Rock, Ark. Gordon had received the Medal of Honor for his actions at Kavieng Harbor in the Bismarck Sea during World War II.

10 SEPTEMBER • The Navy awarded a \$5.1 billion contract for the detail design and construction of *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) to Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Newport News, Va.

13 SEPTEMBER • Frigate *McInerney* (FFG 8), with Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 404 embarked, and a VP-26 P-3C Orion collaborated in the seizure of a 59-foot semi-submersible vessel smuggling an estimated \$107 million worth of cocaine, about 350 miles east of Guatemala. The smugglers attempted to escape and jettison the drugs, but boarders captured the vessel before the submersible was scuttled.

25 SEPTEMBER • *George Washington* (CVN 73), which had been delayed by her 22 May fire, arrived as the forward-deployed carrier at Yokosuka, Japan.

29 SEPTEMBER • The Navy announced the impending completion of a six-year program to purchase and refurbish 44 retired Swiss Air Force F-5E Freedom Fighters to replace F-5E Tiger IIs in the dedicated adversary role as F-5Ns. The process averaged five months per jet, and on 29 April 2009, the Navy accepted the final refurbished aircraft at St. Augustine, Fla.

30 SEPTEMBER • The Navy accepted destroyer *Stockdale* (DDG 106), named in honor of Medal of Honor recipient Vice Adm. James B. Stockdale, at Bath Iron Works, Maine.

30 SEPTEMBER • The Navy approved the AGM-88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile for service.

1 OCTOBER • Africa Command was activated.

1 OCTOBER • The Naval Air Pacific Repair Activity was redesignated Fleet Readiness Center Western Pacific at

NAF Atsugi, Japan. It provided ready-for-tasking aircraft and aviation support equipment to naval forces permanently sited in or deployed to Pacific and Central Commands.

1 OCTOBER • Fleet Aviation Specialized Operational Training Group, Atlantic Fleet, Detachment Jacksonville (Fla.) was disestablished, and merged with the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit, also at Jacksonville.

6 OCTOBER • The Navy announced a contract for EADS North America to provide five UH-72A Lakotas for use in helicopter pilot training at the Naval Test Pilot School, NAS Patuxent River, Md.

6 OCTOBER • United States Forces–Afghanistan was activated, Gen. David D. McKiernan, USA, commanding, with responsibility for all commands deployed to Afghanistan.

7 OCTOBER • HMM-163 of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit engaged in sea testing through 16 October of a UH-1Y Venom during an integration exercise on board amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4).

28 OCTOBER • E-2D Advanced Hawkeyes completed their initial operational assessment at Northrop Grumman, St. Augustine, Fla. Over a period of four weeks, a team from VX-1 at NAS Patuxent River, Md., and the Carrier Airborne Early Warning Weapons School at NAS Fallon, Nev., made ten test flights.

4 NOVEMBER • The Navy certified F/A-18E/Fs to fly at altitudes between 29,000 and 41,000 feet. This affected all Super Hornets produced from Lot 22 and beyond, approximately 340 aircraft.

7 NOVEMBER • NAVAIR announced the delivery of Laser Joint Direct Attack Munition (LJDAM) kits to the fleet. These consisted of laser sensors installed onto 500-pound bomb bodies with JDAM guidance kits, and provided a laser guidance mode to F/A-18A–D Hornets, F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, AV-8B Harrier IIs, and certain USAF aircraft.

7 NOVEMBER • Fleet Readiness Center Southeast announced the completion of repairs on the first of 39 P-3C

Orions grounded in December 2007 for structural fatigue concerns on a portion of their lower outer wings.

12 NOVEMBER • The United States Supreme Court ruled for the Navy on the challenge to the service's use of sonar for 14 antisubmarine warfare combat certification training exercises off southern California. The Navy agreed to train while applying mitigating measures set forth by a National Defense Exception and imposed by the President's Council on Environmental Quality. In December, the Navy entered into an agreement to resolve the lawsuit with several plaintiffs, which included directing \$14.75 million in research funds during the following three years to marine mammal topics of "mutual interest" to the parties concerned.

14 NOVEMBER • Space shuttle *Endeavour* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-126. During this 27th mission to the International Space Station, naval aviator Capt. Christopher J. Ferguson commanded the shuttle, which landed at Edwards AFB, Calif., on 30 November.

17 NOVEMBER • The Navy announced its "preferred alternative" to homeport a nuclear-powered carrier at NS Mayport, Fla. The service had assessed 13 options because of the decommissioning of *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) on 23 March 2007.

21 NOVEMBER • The Navy held a dedication ceremony at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., to welcome the first EA-18G Growler, BuNo 166858—the fourth production aircraft—accepted for the fleet. The Navy had received six Growlers: EA-1 and -2 as engineering and development models used to support developmental testing; and production aircraft G-1, -2, and -3 used for developmental and operational testing.

2 DECEMBER • Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter announced the names of four *Lewis and Clark*-class auxiliary dry cargo ships, two of which honored pioneers in naval aviation. *Washington Chambers* (T-AKE 11) was named for Capt. Washington I. Chambers, who had arranged for aviator Eugene B. Ely to fly a plane from *Birmingham* (Cruiser No. 2) on 14 November 1911. *William McLean* (T-AKE 12) honored William B. McLean, who had helped conceive and develop the AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missile while serving as a physicist for the Navy. These were the first ships named for the men.



A Laser Joint Direct Attack Munition destroys a target during testing at the China Lake Naval Weapons Station, Calif. in August 2008.

2 DECEMBER • Frigate *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58), with HSL-60 Detachment 2 and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 402 embarked, recovered 41 bales of cocaine that smugglers on board a go-fast vessel jettisoned during an interception in the eastern Pacific.

5 DECEMBER • Frigate *Rodney M. Davis* (FFG 60), with HSL-43 Detachment 2 and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 106 embarked, intercepted a fishing vessel and her crew of nine smugglers in the eastern Pacific carrying over four metric tons of cocaine valued at more than \$90 million.

2009

2 JANUARY • The Navy announced the decision to base P-8A Poseidons. One fleet replacement squadron would be located at NAS Jacksonville, Fla.; four squadrons at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.; and three squadrons at MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. Periodic detachments were also to operate from NAS North Island, Calif.

5 JANUARY • The Coast Guard and Lockheed Martin exercised contract options valued at \$13.25 million to install mission systems including belly-mounted surface search radar on board two long-range surveillance HC-130J Hercules.

8 JANUARY • Combined Task Force (CTF) 151 was established to conduct counterpiracy operations at Al Manama, Bahrain. In August 2008, the Maritime Security Patrol Area had been created in the Gulf of Aden to support international efforts to fight piracy, but the task force's charter focused the command's objectives on maritime security operations (MSO) in the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean. Some CTF-150 members operated within legal restrictions, and the establishment of CTF-151 enabled those nations to pursue MSO while other members transported pirates to justice.

9 JANUARY • Three UH-1Ys of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit made the initial deployment of Venoms on board amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4) from NS San Diego, Calif., to the western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Arabian Sea. The ship returned on 1 August.

9 JANUARY • The first pilot production VH-71A Presidential Helicopter, PP-3, arrived to begin the integration and final processing at Lockheed Martin, Owego, N.Y. The aircraft made its maiden flight on 13 January.

10 JANUARY • *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77) was commissioned at NS Norfolk, Va. From 13 to 16 February, the ship conducted and completed builder's sea trials and, from 7 to 10 April, her acceptance sea trials off the Virginia Capes.

13 JANUARY • HSM-71 began the deployment of the first operational squadron equipped with MH-60R Seahawks when *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) sailed from NB Kitsap,

Bremerton, Wash., to the western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Arabian Sea. The ship returned on 10 July.

14 JANUARY • The Navy signed the formal record of decision to homeport a single nuclear-powered aircraft carrier at NS Mayport, Fla. The Navy had assessed 13 alternatives including a "no action" option.

21 JANUARY • The Navy signed the formal record of decision to continue the current level of training on the Southern California Range Complex. This included an evaluation of the effects of sonar upon marine life. Two days later, the service announced its signature of a record of decision concerning the Atlantic Fleet Active Sonar Training Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement. Based on the study and the effectiveness of the measures in place, the Navy selected the "no action" alternative to continue the protections in place.

24 JANUARY • Amphibious transport dock *Green Bay* (LPD 20) was commissioned at Long Beach, Calif.

31 JANUARY • During the deactivation of Sea Control Wing Atlantic and VS-22, the Navy also retired the last ten active S-3B Vikings from fleet service at NAS Jacksonville, Fla.

23 FEBRUARY • The Airborne Strategic Command, Control, and Communications program office accepted the first modified E-6B Mercury Block 1 at L-3 Integrated Systems Group, Waco, Texas.

25 FEBRUARY • The second F-35B Lightning II, BF-2, made its first flight at Fort Worth, Texas. Together with a conventional takeoff and landing F-35A and the first F-35B, BF-1, Lightning IIs had logged a total of 84 flights.

8 MARCH • The Navy launched and christened auxiliary dry cargo ship *Wally Schirra* (T-AKE 8) at General Dynamics–National Steel and Shipbuilding Co., San Diego, Calif.

10 MARCH • The Navy changed the status of Capt. Michael S. Speicher in the Persian Gulf War from "missing/captured" to "missing in action."

15 MARCH • Space shuttle *Discovery* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-119. During the flight to the International Space Station, the crewmembers included naval aviators Capt. John L. Phillips, USNR (Ret.), and Cmdr. Dominic A. Antonelli. The shuttle returned to the center on 28 March.

18 MARCH • Lockheed Martin announced the Navy's certification of the terminal phase capability of the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System. The system has the capability to defeat short-range ballistic missiles during the terminal stage of flight and, by 2010, had been installed in 18 ships.

19 MARCH • Maj. Joseph T. Bachmann, USMC, at Lockheed Martin, Fort Worth, Texas, made the first flight by a Marine in an F-35A Lightning II—AA-1.

20 MARCH • Amphibious transport dock *New Orleans* (LPD 18) and submarine *Hartford* (SSN 768) collided in the Strait of Hormuz. *New Orleans* did not report casualties but 15 sailors on board the submarine received minor injuries. The LPD underwent repairs in a Bahrain drydock and returned to sea on 12 May. *Hartford* returned to the United States for repair.

20 MARCH • Amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4) coordinated the capture of six pirates in the Gulf of Aden. Philippine-flagged motor vessel *Bison Express* sent a distress call as she was being pursued by the suspects in a skiff. An SH-60B from HSL-46, embarked on board cruiser *Gettysburg* (CG 64), spotted the pirates throwing objects overboard, and a visit, board, search, and seizure team from the cruiser seized the suspects, who were taken for questioning to *Boxer* as the afloat staging base for Combined Task Force 151.

29 MARCH • Seven pirates in a skiff attacked German oiler *Spessart* (A 1442) in the Gulf of Aden. Three task forces representing seven nations including amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4), an SH-60B from Spanish frigate *Victoria* (F 82), and a Spanish P-3M pursued the suspects. An AH-1W Super Cobra and a UH-1Y Venom operating from *Boxer* delayed the escape of the pirates until a German boarding team from Greek frigate *Psara* (F 454) took them into custody for transfer to German frigate *Rheinland-Pfalz* (F 209).



A still frame from a video taken by a P-3C Orion shows the pirate-held U.S.-flagged container ship *Maersk Alabama* in the Indian Ocean, 9 April 2009.

31 MARCH • Amphibious assault ship *Tarawa* (LHA 1) was decommissioned at San Diego, Calif.

8 APRIL • Pirates captured U.S.-flagged motor vessel *Maersk Alabama* and her 22 crewmembers, 300 miles from the Somali coast. The crew recaptured their ship along with one of the pirates, but the three surviving pirates held the vessel's skipper, Capt. Richard Phillips, hostage on a lifeboat. On 12 April, SEAL snipers on board destroyer *Bainbridge* (DDG 96) killed the pirates and rescued Phillips. Amphibious assault ship *Boxer* (LHD 4) participated in the rescue, and a ScanEagle unmanned aircraft system provided timely intelligence. In early November 2009, four pirates in a skiff attempted to board *Maersk Alabama* again, but the crew fought off the attackers.

16 APRIL • The Navy accepted the delivery of amphibious assault ship *Makin Island* (LHD 8) at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Gulf Coast, Pascagoula, Miss.

18 APRIL • Destroyer *Stockdale* (DDG 106) was commissioned at Port Hueneme, Calif.

21 APRIL • Frigate *Rodney M. Davis* (FFG 60) returned to NS Everett, Wash. from a counternarcotics deployment in the eastern Pacific. During her sail, the ship and her embarked SH-60B of HSL-43 Detachment 2 intercepted and seized six tons of cocaine and 160 pounds of marijuana, and disrupted shipments of 18 tons of cocaine and three tons of marijuana.



USN 090412-N-XXXXN-001

Capt. Richard Phillips (right) of U.S.-flagged container ship *Maersk Alabama* poses with Cmdr. Frank Castellano, commanding officer of destroyer *Bainbridge* (DDG 96), after his rescue from pirates, 12 April 2009.

25 APRIL • The initial P-8A Poseidon flight test aircraft, T1, completed its first flight near Seattle, Wash.

11 MAY • Space shuttle *Atlantis* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-125. During this final flight to the Hubble Space Telescope, the crewmembers included naval aviators retired Capt. Scott D. Altman and Gregory C. Johnson. On 24 May, *Atlantis* touched down at Edwards AFB, Calif.

13 MAY • Combined Task Force 151 defeated a pirate attack in the Gulf of Aden. Cruiser *Gettysburg* (CG 64) and South Korean destroyer *Munmu the Great* (DDH 976) responded

to a distress call from Egyptian-flagged motor vessel *Amira* when pirates attacked her, 75 nautical miles south of Al Mukalla, Yemen. An SH-60B from HSL-46 Detachment 9, embarked on board *Gettysburg*, located a dhow suspected of serving as a mother ship for pirates. A visit, board, search, and seizure team and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 409 from the cruiser discovered a variety of weapons on board and detained her 17 crewmembers.

15 MAY • The under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics issued a stop work order for Increments I and IV of the VH-71A Presidential Helicopter contract to Lockheed Martin Systems Integration, Owego,

N.Y. On 1 June, the Navy issued a letter of termination to the company for Increments I and II, affecting all activities associated with the helicopter's systems design and demonstration requirements, excepting those technologies undergoing development and evaluation that presented potential benefit to other programs.

23 MAY • An SH-60B of HSL-45 Detachment 4, embarked on board cruiser *Lake Champlain* (CG 57), spotted a skiff in distress in the Gulf of Aden. The Seahawk directed the ship to the area, which rescued 52 people who had been adrift in the vessel for nearly a week.

26 MAY • An SH-60B of HSL-46 Detachment 9, embarked on board cruiser *Gettysburg* (CG 64), responded to Yemeni motor vessel *Alaseb* adrift in the Gulf of Aden. The Seahawk guided the cruiser to the area, which towed the boat and her 11 passengers to a rendezvous with the Yemeni Coast Guard for repairs.

JUNE • CWO2 Michael S. Adams Jr. reported to HSC-22 on board amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5) as the first helicopter pilot to complete his training in the Flying Chief Warrant Officer program and the first to deploy.

1 JUNE • Air France Flight 447 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean during a flight from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to Paris, France, killing all 228 people on board—12 crewmembers and 216 passengers. A P-3C Orion of VP-5 subsequently assisted in the search for survivors from Augusto Severo Airfield at Natal, Brazil. The Navy concluded its support of rescue operations on 13 July.

2 JUNE • The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit affirmed the 5 May 2007 decision by U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge Robert B. Hodges Jr. sustaining the government's default termination of the A-12A Avenger contract.

11 JUNE • The E-2D Advanced Hawkeye program reached Milestone C and received approval to begin low-rate initial production.

19 JUNE • 1st Lt. Michael Brown, USMC, at NAS Whiting Field, Fla., became the 30,000th naval helicopter pilot.

25 JUNE • An MV-22B from VMM-263 of the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit, embarked on board amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5) in the Red Sea, conducted the first ship-to-shore emergency medical evacuation by an Osprey.

2 JULY • The Navy declared the AGM-84K Standoff Land Attack Missile–Expanded Response operationally effective against land-based moving targets after an operational evaluation.

7 JULY • A P-3C Orion and a British warship from Combined Task Force 150 coordinated the seizure of 10 tons of narcotics with an estimated value of \$70 million from a dhow in the Gulf of Aden, about 150 miles southeast of Salalah, Oman.

10 JULY • Amphibious assault ship *Makin Island* (LHD 8) sailed from Pascagoula, Miss., around South America to her commissioning. During the voyage, she inaugurated flight operations with Army CH-47 Chinooks attached to Joint Task Force Bravo, CH-46E Sea Knights, and CH-53E Super Stallions, and Coast Guard HH-60J Jayhawks and HH-65A Dolphins. She arrived at NS San Diego, Calif., on 14 September.

15 JULY • Space shuttle *Endeavour* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-127. During this 29th mission to the International Space Station, the crewmembers included naval aviator Col. Douglas G. Hurley, USMC. The shuttle returned to the center on 31 July.

28 JULY • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead participated in the introduction of the F-35C Lightning II at Lockheed Martin, Fort Worth, Texas.

29 JULY • The Department of Defense announced that the initial operational test and evaluation of EA-18Gs found them operationally effective, operationally suitable, and recommended them for introduction to the fleet.

30 JULY • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead delivered remarks during the roll-out of the P-8A Poseidon at Boeing Co., Renton, Wash.

AUGUST • The AGM-84K Standoff Land Attack Missile–Expanded Response achieved two milestones: its 100th

launch (from an F/A-18C Hornet) and the first launch from an F-16 Fighting Falcon. Both events occurred at NAWS China Lake, Calif.

1 AUGUST • Consolidated Maintenance Organization 10 was disestablished at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash. This final such command in service had maintained P-3C Orions for four patrol squadrons and EP-3E Aries IIs for two fleet air reconnaissance squadrons, but the projection of a virtually all-sailor maintenance force for P-8A Poseidons drove the decision to revert to organic patrol community maintainers.

2 AUGUST • The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology positively identified the remains of Capt. Michael S. Speicher. Bedouins had directed a recovery team from Multi-National Force–West to two sites in the Iraqi desert about 62 miles west of Ramadi. On 17 January 1991, an (apparent) Iraqi surface-to-air missile shot down Speicher’s Hornet and he became the first American casualty of the Persian Gulf War.

5 AUGUST • EA-18Gs from VAQ-129 and -132 completed the first Growler at-sea landings on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

7 AUGUST • Typhoon Morakot struck central and southern Taiwan, triggering severe flooding and mudslides that claimed hundreds of lives. HSC-25 Detachment 6 helped move food, water, and medical supplies from sea to shore to assist Taiwanese relief efforts.

18 AUGUST • Frigate *Carr* (FFG 52), with an SH-60B Seahawk from HSL-42 Detachment 8 and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 409 embarked, intercepted a go-fast vessel and her three smugglers in the Caribbean, seizing 46 bales—more than one ton—of cocaine with an estimated value of \$22 million.

21 AUGUST • The Navy accepted the delivery of amphibious transport dock *New York* (LPD 21) at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Avondale, La.

27 AUGUST • The arrival of the first two T-6B Texan IIs began the turnover from T-34C Turbomentors for primary flight training at NAS Whiting Field, Fla.

28 AUGUST • Space shuttle *Discovery* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-128. During this 30th mission to the International Space Station, the crew included Col. Patrick G. Forrester, USA (Ret.), who had graduated from the Naval Test Pilot School, and naval aviator Col. Frederick W. Sturckow, USMC. On 11 September, *Discovery* landed at Edwards AFB, Calif.

1 SEPTEMBER • The Navy accepted the delivery of auxiliary dry cargo ship *Wally Schirra* (T-AKE 8) at General Dynamics–National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, San Diego, Calif.

17 SEPTEMBER • Super Typhoon Choi-Wan struck Alamagan and Agrihan, about 146 nautical miles north of Saipan, Marianas Islands. Two MH-60S Seahawks from HSC-25 Detachment 1, embarked on board auxiliary dry cargo ship *Alan B. Shepard* (T-AKE 3), delivered relief supplies.

21 SEPTEMBER • The Navy accepted the final production E-2C Hawkeye 2000—A-205—at Northrop Grumman, St. Augustine, Fla.

22 SEPTEMBER • EA-18G Growlers attained their initial operational capability.

25 SEPTEMBER • Tropical Storm Ketsana (known as Ondoy in the Philippines) struck central Luzon, Philippines, killing more than 250 people and rendering tens of thousands homeless. On 27 and 28 September, U.S. and Filipino servicemembers rescued 52 people from rising floodwaters in the capital. On 4 October, dock landing ships *Tortuga* (LSD 46) and *Harpers Ferry* (LSD 49), with elements of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, arrived to assist Joint Special Operations Task Force–Philippines in providing humanitarian relief.

28 SEPTEMBER • The Navy announced the completion of two steps in the introduction of the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System. The first phase of Highly Accelerated Life Testing gauged the launch motor’s ability to operate in simulated at-sea conditions. The second phase System Functional Demonstration replicated full-scale launching capabilities.

29 SEPTEMBER • The Boeing Company concluded a 42-month risk reduction program for GBU-40 Small Diameter Bombs when an F-15E Strike Eagle dropped one of the weapons at Eglin AFB, Fla. Previous test flights had occurred in May and August 2007.

29 SEPTEMBER • An 8.3 magnitude earthquake struck 125 miles south of Apia on American Samoa, generating a tsunami that inundated the eastern coast of Samoa and parts of Tonga killing more than 160 people. The next day, frigate *Ingraham* (FFG 61), with an embarked SH-60B Seahawk, arrived and helped members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Army National Guardsmen, who had been flown to the area by Air Force C-17A Globemaster IIIs. A Coast Guard HC-130H flew aerial surveillance missions.

30 SEPTEMBER • An earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale rocked western Sumatra, Indonesia, killing more than 750 people and triggering landslides that wiped-out villages and blocked roads. On 9 October, amphibious transport dock *Denver* (LPD 9), with Marines of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, and destroyer *McCampbell* (DDG 85), arrived to support international relief efforts. Three HMM-265 CH-53E Super Stallions from *Denver*, and two HSL-51 Detachment 5 SH-60B Seahawks from *McCampbell*, delivered essential relief supplies and teams to people in remote areas isolated by the landslides. Additional aircraft, including two SA-330J Pumas from auxiliary dry cargo ship *Richard E. Byrd* (T-AKE 4), reinforced these operations. The Navy concluded its humanitarian assistance on 16 October.

1 OCTOBER • A Broad Area Maritime Surveillance Demonstrator (BAMS-D) returned from the first eight-month deployment to Central Command of the RQ-4B-based system. The Global Hawk flew more than 60 sorties that supplied Commander Task Force 57 with maritime intelligence and surveillance. A second BAMS-D deployed prior to the return of the first.

1 OCTOBER • Carrier Strike Group 1 was established at San Diego, Calif.

2 OCTOBER • Electronic Attack Wing Pacific Fleet declared the first operational EA-18G Growler-equipped

squadron, VAQ-132 at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., “safe for flight operations.”

2 OCTOBER • Typhoon Parma (known as Pepeng in the Philippines) struck Luzon. Dock landing ships *Tortuga* (LSD 46) and *Harpers Ferry* (LSD 49), with elements of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked, responded. Aircraft that provided airlift support to more than 1,400 people included ten CH-46E Sea Knights operating from the two ships with U.S. and Filipino servicemembers.

4 OCTOBER • Amphibious assault ship *Wasp* (LHD 1) deployed to the Fourth Fleet from NS Norfolk, Va. The ship served as a forward operating base with the Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force, Joint Interagency Task Force–South, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment 405 during counternarcotics operations. *Wasp* returned from this first deployment of its kind to that fleet on 22 December.

5 OCTOBER • Two MQ-8B Fire Scouts, BuNos 167791 and 167792, made the first deployment of the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) during a counternarcotics cruise to the Caribbean with HSL-42 Detachment 7 on board frigate *McInerney* (FFG 8) from NS Mayport, Fla. *McInerney* made the first interception of drug smugglers using Fire Scouts on 3 April 2010. The UAVs flew 24 counternarcotics and systems evaluation flights. The ship returned on 15 April.

7 OCTOBER • Frigate *Hawes* (FFG 53), with HSL-48 Detachment 10 embarked, returned to NS Norfolk, Va., from a counternarcotics deployment to the Caribbean and western Atlantic. The ship’s operations resulted in the seizure of 200 barrels of cocaine.

15 OCTOBER • Lt. Roger Stanton, accompanied by Boeing pilot Doug Benjamin, completed the first flight by a Navy pilot of a P-8A Poseidon in test aircraft T1 over Puget Sound, Wash. The mission initiated a 36-month formal naval flight test program by VX-1 and -20 and the Boeing Company to evaluate Poseidons T1, T2, and T3.

15 OCTOBER • Cruiser *Anzio* (CG 68), with an SH-60B from HSL-48 Detachment 7 embarked, seized approximately four tons of hashish with an estimated street

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An MQ-8B Fire Scout hovers over the flight deck of frigate *McInerney* (FFG 8) while the ship sails in the Atlantic, 8 May 2009.

value of \$28 million from a skiff in the Gulf of Aden, about 170 miles southwest of Salalah, Oman.

19 OCTOBER • Frigate *Jarrett* (FFG 33) returned to NS San Diego, Calif., from a counternarcotics deployment to the eastern Pacific. The ship's operations resulted in the seizure or disruption of the smuggling of more than nine tons of narcotics with an estimated value of \$266 million.

20 OCTOBER • The Navy accepted the delivery of its final T-45C, the 221st Goshawk delivered, at Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo.

NOVEMBER • The first of five UH-72A Lakotas, BuNo 168245, arrived for use in helicopter pilot training at the

Naval Test Pilot School, NAS Patuxent River, Md. The fifth Lakota arrived in January 2010.

6 NOVEMBER • Ten MV-22Bs from VMM-263 of the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit launched from amphibious assault ship *Bataan* (LHD 5) to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan. The aircraft made the first deployment of Ospreys into that country in three waves, making the 510 nautical-mile flight in just over two hours to VMM-261 of the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade.

7 NOVEMBER • Amphibious transport dock *New York* (LPD 21) was commissioned at New York City, N.Y.

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12 NOVEMBER • The Navy opened the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System armature at the system functional demonstration site, Joint Base McGuire–Fort Dix–Lakehurst, N.J.

14 NOVEMBER • Lockheed Martin test pilot David Nelson made the inaugural flight of the first optimized F-35A Lightning II, aircraft AF-1, at Fort Worth, Texas.

15 NOVEMBER • Lockheed Martin test pilot Jon Beesley flew the first F-35B, BF-1, from Fort Worth, Texas, via Dobbins AFB, Ga., to NAS Patuxent River, Md. The ferry flight initiated a series of Lightning II arrivals for testing at Patuxent River.

16 NOVEMBER • Space shuttle *Atlantis* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-129. This 31st flight to the International Space Station marked the final crew rotation mission to the facility, and the crew included naval aviators Col. Charles O. Hobaugh, USMC; Lt. Col. Randolph J. Bresnik, USMC; and Navy Capts. Michael J. Foreman (Ret.) and Barry E. Wilmore. *Atlantis* returned to the center on 27 November.

20 NOVEMBER • The Navy released a draft environmental impact statement concerning the military build-up on Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands. The proposed actions included the construction of a deep-draft wharf and shoreside infrastructure improvements to support a transient nuclear-powered carrier at Apra, Guam, and the expansion of aviation facilities ashore for Marines transferred from Okinawa. The service released the final statement on 29 July 2010.

23 NOVEMBER • The Department of Defense approved EA-18Gs for full-rate production, and authorized the procurement and construction of 54 Growlers remaining in the program of record.

24 NOVEMBER • Amphibious assault ship *Makin Island* (LHD 8) was commissioned as the eighth and final vessel of the *Wasp* (LHD 1) class at NAS North Island, Calif.

11 DECEMBER • The retirement of the last operational Navy UH-3H, BuNo 154121, took place at NAS Patuxent River, Md. HMX-1 then used the *Sea King* as a trainer.

7 JANUARY • BAE Systems, Inc. test pilot Graham Tomlinson engaged the short takeoff/vertical landing propulsion system of an F-35B Lightning II for the first time during a flight at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

12 JANUARY • A magnitude 7.3 earthquake devastated Port-au-Prince, Haiti, killing an estimated 230,000 people. The United States initiated Operation Unified Response—humanitarian aid to victims. At the operation's peak, 23 Navy ships participated including *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) with Carrier Air Wing 17 embarked; amphibious assault ships *Bataan* (LHD 5) and *Nassau* (LHA 4); dock landing ships *Ashland* (LSD 48), *Carter Hall* (LSD 50), *Fort McHenry* (LSD 43), and *Gunston Hall* (LSD 44); amphibious transport dock *Mesa Verde* (LPD 19), with the 22d and 24th Marine Expeditionary Units embarked; and 10 Coast Guard ships.

A total of 264 U.S. fixed-wing aircraft took part including C-2A Greyhounds of VRC-40; C-40A Clippers; C-130 Hercules; E-2C Hawkeyes of VAW-125; and P-3C Orions of VP-26 and -62; along with 57 helicopters and tiltrotor aircraft including USCG HH-60J Jayhawks; MH-53E Sea Dragons of HM-14 and -15; SH-60B Seahawks of HSL-46 and -60; MH-60Ss of HSC-9, -22, -26, and -28; MV-22B Ospreys of VMM-162; and Marine CH-46E Sea Knights and UH-1N Iroquois. The Air Force diverted an RQ-4A en route to Afghanistan and operated the Global Hawk on several reconnaissance missions over Haiti from NAS Patuxent River, Md. Airlifters of all the services and international aid agencies staged through NAS Jacksonville, Fla. *Carl Vinson* departed on 1 February, and by 24 March these vessels largely sailed from Haitian waters, although relief efforts continued into the summer.

18 JANUARY • Amphibious transport dock *Mesa Verde* (LPD 19) sailed on her maiden deployment to the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and Persian Gulf from NS Norfolk, Va.

20 JANUARY • A P-3C Orion and a Coast Guard HC-130H Hercules located a Chinese fishing vessel in distress about 575 miles from Guam, and directed a merchantman to aid the mariners.



USN 130514-N-UZ648-298

Assigned to VX-23, the second of two X-47B Unmanned Combat Air System demonstrators, BuNo 168064, flies by *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77), 14 May 2013. Two months later, this test vehicle made the first arrested carrier landing at sea by an unmanned aircraft.

25 JANUARY • Ethiopian Airlines Flight 409 crashed in the Mediterranean Sea while en route from Beirut, Lebanon, to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, killing all 90 people on board. Aircraft and vessels of the Sixth Fleet that assisted in the search and rescue included a P-3C Orion, destroyer *Ramage* (DDG 61), and salvage ship *Grapple* (T-ARS 53).

26 JANUARY • The Navy announced adjustments to the Aviation Career Continuation Pay program to provide selected bonuses as an incentive to eligible pilots and naval flight officers through department head, sea duty, and command billets. The changes contained within NAVADMINs 031/10 and 032/10 included the reduction of long-term annual, at-sea, and command bonuses.

27 JANUARY • *George H. W. Bush* (CVN 77), through 29 January, completed sea trials off the Virginia Capes.

29 JANUARY • The Tenth Fleet, Vice Adm. Bernard J. McCullough III commanding, and the Fleet Cyber Command were reestablished and established, respectively, at Ft. George G. Meade, Md.

1 FEBRUARY • Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates delivered the 2010 Ballistic Missile Defense Review to Congress. From March 2009 through January 2010, the department conducted this first such review, and its recommendations included the further development of ship-based RIM-161B Standard SM-3 Block 1A Interceptor Missiles.

1 FEBRUARY • The Direct Attack Moving Target Capability program achieved Milestone C. The system facilitated strikes by F/A-18 Hornets, F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, and AV-8B Harrier IIs with Joint Direct Attack Munitions against maneuvering targets.

7 FEBRUARY • The Navy, through 10 February, evaluated the integration of shipboard systems with X-47B Unmanned Combat Air Systems during flight deck certifications with *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) and Carrier Air Wing 2 off southern California.

8 FEBRUARY • Space shuttle *Endeavour* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-130. During this 32d mission to the International Space Station, naval aviation crewmembers comprised Col. George D. Zamka, USMC, and Capt. Kathryn P. Hire. *Endeavour* returned to the center on 21 February.

16 FEBRUARY • Littoral combat ship *Freedom* (LCS 1) began the vessel's maiden deployment to the Caribbean and eastern Pacific via the Panama Canal from NS Mayport, Fla. An MH-60S Seahawk of HSC-22 Detachment 2 and a Coast Guard Law Enforcement detachment embarked. On 22 February, *Freedom* made the ship's first drug seizure when she disrupted a go-fast vessel and recovered more than a quarter ton of cocaine. During the voyage, the ship made four drug interceptions seizing more than 5¼ tons of cocaine and 13 smugglers. On 23 April, she reached her new homeport of NS San Diego, Calif.

24 FEBRUARY • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead presented his Fiscal Year 2011 Posture Statement to Congress, which included the intention to reduce Navy unit deployed squadrons from 12 to 10 aircraft each to match a corresponding decrease in Marine expeditionary squadrons.

25 FEBRUARY • NAVAIR celebrated the completion of one million operational flight hours by Block I AIM-9X Sidewinder air-to-air missiles at Raytheon Missile Systems, Tucson, Ariz.

2 MARCH • Boeing Company, St. Louis, Mo., was awarded an \$11.4 million Navy contract to supply Laser Joint Direct Attack Munitions for the fleet's Direct Attack Moving Target

Capability program. The initial contract called for the delivery of 23 munition kits for testing and evaluation, and expected follow-on options totaling 11,000 more.

4 MARCH • An F/A-18F Super Hornet performed the first captive carriage test of an AGM-154C-1 Joint Standoff Weapon at NAWCWD China Lake, Calif.

10 MARCH • Neil A. Armstrong received honorary naval astronaut wings during a ceremony on board *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69).

18 MARCH • BAE Systems, Inc. test pilot Graham Tomlinson completed the first vertical landing of an F-35B Lightning II at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

18 MARCH • NAVAIR's Common Aviation Support Equipment program office awarded Lockheed Martin, Orlando, Fla., an \$83.3 million five-year development contract to design, fabricate, and test the Electronic Consolidated Automated Support System.

26 MARCH • The North Koreans torpedoed and sank South Korean corvette *Cheonan* (PCC 772) in the Yellow Sea. Allied ships that responded to the crisis included dock landing ship *Harpers Ferry* (LSD 49), and MH-60S Seahawks of HSC-25 Detachment 6 operating from the LSD assisted South Korean salvage efforts. The detachment returned to Guam on 3 June.

31 MARCH • Lockheed Martin, Orlando, Fla., announced the successful completion of a wide range of tests on the multi-mode seeker for Joint Air-to-Ground Missiles.

31 MARCH • President Barack Obama, at Joint Base Andrews, Md., announced his administration's plans on energy security including the Navy's biofuel program. The service's critical protocols to certify alternative fuels included an experimental 50/50 biofuel blend for F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, the intended use of biofuels in all aircraft by 2016, and alternative energy sources to power half of all shore aviation establishments by 2020.

1 APRIL • Eleven pirates in three skiffs attacked Sierra Leone-flagged tanker *Evita*, 310 miles northwest of the Seychelles. A Swedish maritime patrol aircraft responded to

2010 continued

the tanker's distress call and located the boats, after which an SH-60B Seahawk from *Farragut* (DDG 99) directed the destroyer to intercept the pirates.

1 APRIL • Pirates fired on *Nicholas* (FFG 47) west of the Seychelles. The frigate and her embarked SH-60B Seahawk sank their skiff, captured the mother ship, and five pirates from the two vessels.

3 APRIL • An MQ-8B of HSL-42 Detachment 7, embarked on board frigate *McInerney* (FFG 8), proved crucial in the interception of a go-fast vessel smuggling drugs in the eastern Pacific. The Fire Scout filmed the smugglers' activities after which the frigate seized the boat and 132 pounds of cocaine, and compelled the traffickers to jettison an estimated 440 pounds of the illicit cargo. This was the first Fire Scout operation to combat drug smugglers.

5 APRIL • Space shuttle *Discovery* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-131. During this 33rd mission to the International Space Station, naval aviator Capt. Alan G. Poindexter was the spacecraft's commander. It returned to the center on 20 April.

7 APRIL • Test pilot David Nelson flew F-35B BF-4 at Fort Worth, Texas, during the first flight of a mission systems-equipped Lightning II.

7 APRIL • Littoral combat ship *Freedom* (LCS 1) completed her first integrated at-sea operations with *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) off southern California.

8 APRIL • The initial proof-of-principle flight test of an AGM-114R Hellfire II air-to-ground missile with a live warhead occurred at Eglin AFB, Fla.

9 APRIL • A groundbreaking ceremony heralded the opening of the P-8A Poseidon Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft Integrated Training Center at NAS Jacksonville, Fla.

10 APRIL • T1, the first P-8A Poseidon test aircraft, BuNo 167951, arrived for evaluations at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

10 APRIL • Six pirates on board a skiff attacked dock landing ship *Ashland* (LSD 48) in the Gulf of Aden. *Ashland* sank the boat and captured the pirates.

12 APRIL • Lockheed Martin delivered the 1,000th production AGM-158 Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) to the USAF. The Navy intended JASSMs to be compatible with F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, F-35B/C Lightning IIs, and P-3C Orions.

17 APRIL • Destroyer *William P. Lawrence* (DDG 110) was commissioned in honor of Vice Adm. William P. Lawrence at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Miss. On 28 June 1967, pilot and squadron commanding officer Cmdr. Lawrence and radar intercept officer Lt. j.g. James W. Bailey of VF-143 launched in an F-4B, BuNo 152242, from *Constellation* (CVA 64) to bomb North Vietnamese petroleum and transshipment facilities at Nam Dinh. Antiaircraft fire shot down the Phantom II and both men endured captivity until 1973. Lawrence's decorations include the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, and Purple Heart.

19 APRIL • Fleet Readiness Center East at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., accepted the first two MQ-8B Fire Scouts to perform maintenance on them in conjunction with a corrosion assessment.

19 APRIL • Training Wing 5 initiated ground school training for the T-6B Texan II flight training syllabus at NAS Whiting Field, Fla., with 14 students.

20 APRIL • An accident on board British Petroleum/Transocean drilling rig *Deepwater Horizon* led to a catastrophic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Emergency responders subsequently established five staging areas along the Gulf coast including NAS Pensacola, Fla. Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and civilian aid workers set out oil containment booms at the naval air station and along areas of the Alabama and Florida coastlines, and NAS Pensacola trained two-week classes of 50 students each to clean beaches.

23 APRIL • Ground was broken for the construction of the Weapons Dynamic Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation Center at NAWCWD China Lake, Calif., to test weapon systems. This marked the center's tenth and final Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission 2005 construction project.

5 MAY • Joint Air-to-Ground Missiles successfully completed 200 hours of F/A-18E/F Super Hornet wind tunnel testing at NASA's Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, Calif.

5 MAY • Submarine *Cheyenne* (SSN 773) successfully fired a BGM-109 Block IV-E Tomahawk Land Attack Missile from off the southern California coast into China Lake Test Range, Calif.

7 MAY • Fleet Readiness Center East at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., completed rework on the last retired CH-53E, BuNo 161181, and delivered the Super Stallion to HMT-302. From August 2005, the center reworked two CH-53Ds and eight CH-53Es from the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

7 MAY • Amphibious transport dock *San Diego* (LPD 22) was launched at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Miss.

14 MAY • Space shuttle *Atlantis* launched from John F. Kennedy Space Center, Fla., on mission STS-132. During this 34th mission to the International Space Station, naval aviators Capt. Kenneth Ham and Cmdr. Dominic A. Antonelli served respectively as spacecraft commander and pilot. *Atlantis* returned to the space center on 26 May.

14 MAY • The Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics certified to Congress that the proposed F/A-18 multi-year procurement met statutory requirements for 124 F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and EA-18G Growlers into Fiscal Year 2013. The action supported the Navy's intention to acquire the remaining program of record of 515 Super Hornets and 114 Growlers.

18 MAY • Instructor Capt. Michael Perkins, USMC, and student Ens. Christopher D. Farkas of VT-3 at NAS Whiting Field, Fla., completed the first naval student flight in a T-6B Texan II.

26 MAY • Cruiser *San Jacinto* (CG 56), with her embarked SH-60B Seahawk of HSL-42, designated Proud Warrior 433, and a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment, rescued five Yemeni mariners and their dhow *Al Jawat* from 13 pirates, 68 miles southeast of Ras Fartak, Yemen. *San*

Jacinto apprehended the suspects and transferred them to the Yemeni Navy. On 31 May and 1 June, the cruiser disrupted nine more pirates in a skiff from attacking merchant vessel *Avenue Beauty*, about 90 miles north of Somalia. Proud Warrior 433 aircrewmen AW2 Casey Halliwell tracked the pirates with radar, and AW2 Corey Whittle fired warning shots across the skiff's bow and compelled the pirates to surrender.

27 MAY • Two eruptions of Pacaya volcano followed by the impact of Tropical Storm Agatha caused widespread devastation in Guatemala. On 31 May, frigate *Underwood* (FFG 36) and her embarked SH-60B of HSL-60 arrived off the coast and began humanitarian assistance flights. Into early June, the Seahawk and four other U.S. helicopters flew more than 40 sorties to deliver supplies to victims. On 5 October, *Underwood* completed her counternarcotics deployment after four interceptions that resulted in the seizure of 4.3 metric tons of cocaine valued at \$301.7 million.

28 MAY • NAVAIR announced the readiness of the first AH-1Z Viper full-motion cockpit simulator to train pilots at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

5 JUNE • Destroyer *Spruance* (DDG 111) was christened in honor of Adm. Raymond A. Spruance at Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine.

6 JUNE • Test pilot Jeff Knowles completed the first flight of an F-35C Lightning II, CF-1, at NAS JRB Fort Worth, Texas.

8 JUNE • The transfer of the last P-3C Orion of VP-26 completed the transition of patrol squadrons from NAS Brunswick, Maine, to NAS Jacksonville, Fla.

8 JUNE • The E-6B Airborne Strategic Command, Control, and Communications program completed a Milestone C review that enabled Mercury Block I aircraft to enter the production and deployment phase.

12 JUNE • Amphibious transport dock *San Diego* (LPD 22) was christened at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Miss.



USMC 100821-NF-3497D-378

An MH-53E Sea Dragon of HM-15 Detachment 2 evacuates flood victims from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan, 21 August 2010.

18 JUNE • Commercial vessel *Sea Adventure II* ran aground near South Coronado Island, Mexico. A Coast Guard MH-60T Jayhawk and cutter *Edisto* (WPB 1313), harbor police, and civilian mariners rescued all 26 people on board. After temporary repairs, *Sea Adventure II* reached San Diego, Calif.

2 JULY • Pakistani fishing vessel *Al An Wari* sank in the Gulf of Aden. On 5 July, a P-3C Orion of VP-16 forward deployed to Djibouti spotted 16 survivors in a life raft about 144 miles west of Socotra Island, and directed an SH-60B from frigate *Elrod* (FFG 55) to the area. The Seahawk rescued 12 of the mariners and the frigate saved the remaining four men.

8 JULY • Navy-manned MZ-3A Advanced Airship Flying Laboratory arrived at Lake Front Airport, New Orleans, La. The Coast Guard requested the assistance of the airship, which was a modified American Blimp Corporation A-170 blimp, to detect spreading oil and wildlife threatened by the

accident on board the British Petroleum/Transocean drilling rig *Deepwater Horizon* in the Gulf of Mexico on 20 April.

22 JULY • The Army and Navy authenticated the keel of joint high-speed vessel *Spearhead* (JHSV 1) at Austal USA Shipyard, Mobile, Ala. The vessel was intended for fast intra-theater transportation of troops and equipment, and was equipped with a small flight deck to support air vehicle launches and recoveries.

28 JULY • Heavy rains into the first week of August caused flooding in Pakistan that killed an estimated 1,600 people and rendered hundreds of thousands homeless. On 9 August, amphibious assault ship *Peleliu* (LHA 5), dock landing ship *Pearl Harbor* (LSD 52), and amphibious transport dock *Dubuque* (LPD 8) arrived off Karachi, Pakistan. At times, 15 CH-46E Sea Knights of HMM-165 and CH-53E Super Stallions of HMM-465 from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), augmented by HSC-23

MH-60S Seahawks and three HM-15 Detachment 2 MH-53E Sea Dragons, contributed to the evacuation of more than 10,000 people and delivery of 1.9 million pounds of relief supplies. Some of these helicopters operated from Pakistani airfields at Chaklala, Ghazi, and Pano Aqil, and two SA-330J Pumas flew from auxiliary dry cargo ship *Lewis and Clark* (T-AKE 1). Meanwhile, VMA-311 AV-8B Harrier IIs carried out close air support missions from *Peleliu* for coalition troops fighting Islamic extremists in Afghanistan. On 16 September, amphibious assault ship *Kearsarge* (LHD 3), dock landing ship *Carter Hall* (LSD 50), and amphibious transport dock *Ponce* (LPD 15), with MV-22B Ospreys of VMM-266 and helicopters from the 26th MEU embarked, arrived to participate. Air Force cargo aircraft and ten Army CH-47 Chinooks and eight UH-60 Black Hawks also provided humanitarian assistance. *Peleliu* departed on 31 October. *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) subsequently arrived, and on 15 November, four Super Stallions of the 26th MEU refueled on board.

29 JULY • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead accepted the E-2D to the fleet with the delivery of the first Advanced Hawkeye to VAW-120 at Norfolk, Va.

11 AUGUST • P-8A reached Milestone C and the Defense Acquisition Board approved the commencement of low-rate Poseidon production.

18 AUGUST • An F/A-18C Hornet of VFA-37, embarked on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) in the north Arabian Sea, spotted a vessel on fire about 50 miles from the carrier. Two SH-60F Seahawks of HS-7 rescued eight Iranian mariners from the boat.

26 AUGUST • The Naval Air Training Command celebrated one million T-45 Goshawk flight hours at NAS Cecil Field, Fla.



The devastation of heavy flooding in Pano Aqil, Pakistan, is apparent to crewmembers of an HMM-165 CH-46E Sea Knight.

SEPTEMBER • GAU-21 .50-caliber weapon systems deployed for the first time with the UH-1Y Venoms of HMLA-169 from Camp Pendleton, Calif.

7 SEPTEMBER • NAVAIR redesignated the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance unmanned aircraft system, based on the RQ-4B Global Hawk, as MQ-4C.

8 SEPTEMBER • Pirates seized Antigua-Barbuda–flagged merchant vessel *Magellan Star* in the Gulf of Aden. The next day, Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, embarked on board amphibious transport dock *Dubuque* (LPD 8) and covered by helicopters and assisted by cruiser *Princeton* (CG 59) and Turkish frigate *Gökçeada* (F 494), boarded *Magellan Star*, rescuing all 11 crewmembers and capturing nine pirates.

11 SEPTEMBER • Auxiliary dry cargo ship *Washington Chambers* (T-AKE 11) was christened and launched at General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, San Diego, Calif. The ship was delivered to the fleet on 23 February 2011.

20 SEPTEMBER • The Department of Defense released the Record of Decision concerning the Guam and Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Military Relocation Final Environmental Impact Statement. The



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A UH-1N Iroquois covers Marines during the boarding and seizure of motor vessel *Magellan Star* in the Gulf of Aden, 9 September 2010.

Navy deferred for the near term the selection of a location for the construction of a transient carrier berth at Apra. The Marines determined the only reasonable site for their air operations was Andersen AFB, North Ramp.

24 SEPTEMBER • The In-Service Engineering Facility, designed for the inspection, maintenance, and packaging of bombs and missiles, opened at NAWCWD China Lake, Calif.

27 SEPTEMBER • The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification and return of the remains of Lt. Francis B. McIntyre and ARM2 William L. Russell of VC-24. On 10 November 1943, they launched in an SBD-5, BuNo 35931, on a bombing and strafing raid from Munda Airfield, New Georgia. Witnesses last saw the

Dauntless flying through an explosion on Buka Island, Papua New Guinea.

28 SEPTEMBER • NAVAIR announced the purchase of 124 F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and EA-18G Growlers based on a multi-year procurement contract through 2014.

6 OCTOBER • The Naval Medical Research Unit Dayton was activated at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio. The action completed the merger of the Naval Aerospace Medical Research and the Naval Medicine Environmental Health Effects Laboratories.

8 OCTOBER • The Dr. William B. McLean Laboratory, designed for engineering, logistics, modeling, and simulation, opened at NAWCWD China Lake, Calif. This



USN 101106-N-0000X-098 (courtesy of Lockheed Martin)

The first F-35C Lightning II carrier variant arrives at NAS Patuxent River, Md., 6 November 2010.

laboratory was the largest planned Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission 2005 construction project at the center.

13 OCTOBER • NAVAIR announced the completion of the Barking Sands Underwater Range Expansion refurbishment off Kauai, Hawaii. The program enhanced antisubmarine warfare training through increased acoustics and frequency bandwidth.

13 OCTOBER • The Navy successfully tested the AN/DVS-1 Coastal Battlefield Reconnaissance Analysis Block I system with an MQ-8B Fire Scout at Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz. The system was designed to detect minefields and obstacles prior to amphibious assaults.

15 OCTOBER • The Navy accepted the first 11 production AGM-154C-1 Joint Standoff Weapons at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, McAlester, Okla.

15 OCTOBER • One of three test P-8As completed several sonobuoy launches in the Atlantic Test Range. These were the first sonobuoy drops by Poseidons since they began testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

5 NOVEMBER • Hurricane Tomas struck western Haiti. On 6 November, helicopters operating from amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) began damage assessment flights in support of international relief teams. *Iwo Jima* departed on 9 November.

2010 continued

5 NOVEMBER • Fleet Weather Center San Diego was established at NAS North Island, Calif. This completed the relocation of Naval Aviation Forecasting Detachment San Diego, Strike Group Oceanography Team San Diego, and Naval Maritime Forecast Center to the command.

6 NOVEMBER • Test pilot David Nelson flew CF-1, the first F-35C Lightning II, for testing to NAS Patuxent River, Md.

8 NOVEMBER • A fire erupted in the aft engine room of Carnival cruise ship *Carnival Splendor* and she lost power 150 nautical miles southwest of San Diego, Calif. The next day, C-2A Greyhounds of VRC-30 transported supplies from NAS North Island, Calif., to *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), and HH-60H and SH-60F Seahawks of HS-4 then delivered the provisions to the stricken ship. A Coast Guard HC-130H Hercules, an HH-65C Dolphin, MH-60T Jayhawks, and cutters *Aspen* (WLB 208), *Edisto* (WPB 1313), *Morgenthau* (WHEC 722), and *Petrel* (WPB 87350) also participated. Tugs towed the cruise ship to San Diego.

10 NOVEMBER • Two F-35Bs completed the first formation flight of Lightning IIs at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

12 NOVEMBER • Two EA-18G Growlers began validation training at NSAWC Fallon, Nev.

18 NOVEMBER • An F-35 completed the 500th test flight of a Lightning II.

18 NOVEMBER • An MH-60S Seahawk of HX-21 flew powered by an experimental 50/50 biofuel blend at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

28 NOVEMBER • NAVAIR approved AH-1Z Vipers for full-rate production.

2 DECEMBER • NAVAIR announced the award of two fixed-price contracts valued at \$29.9 million and \$45.8 million, respectively, for the Cargo Resupply Unmanned Aerial System to Boeing/Frontier Systems and Lockheed Martin. These originated from an urgent need to reduce the exposure of Marines to enemy improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan and Iraq.

6 DECEMBER • Frigate *Doyle* (FFG 39) and her embarked Coast Guard Law Enforcement detachment intercepted smuggling vessel *Rio Tuira* in the eastern Pacific about 180 miles from Panama and seized 22 bales of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$15.4 million.

9 DECEMBER • The F-35 Lightning II program achieved its 2010 goal of 394 test flights.

10 DECEMBER • NAVSEA announced the successful completion of the first phase of shipboard mine countermeasure mission package testing for littoral combat ship *Independence* (LCS 2) with a reconfigured MH-60S Seahawk.

18 DECEMBER • Lt. Daniel Radocaj of VX-23 made the first launch of the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System in an F/A-18E Super Hornet at Joint Base McGuire–Fort Dix–Lakehurst, N.J.